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A STUDY OF ARMY CAMP LIFE DURING AMERICAN REVOLUTION

BY

MARY HAZEL SNUFF

B. S. North - Western College, 1917.

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THESIS

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the

Degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

IN HISTORY

IN

THE GRADUATE SCHOOL

OF THE

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS

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May 29 1918

I HEREBY RECOMMEND THAT THE THESIS PREPARED UNDER MY  
SUPERVISION BY May Hazel Snuff  
ENTITLED A Study of Camp Life during Amer-  
ican Revolution

BE ACCEPTED AS FULFILLING THIS PART OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR  
THE DEGREE OF Master of Arts

H. J. Robertson

In Charge of Thesis

Lawrence M. Larson

Head of Department

Recommendation concurred in\*


Committee  
on  
Final Examination\*

\*Required for doctor's degree but not for master's

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## INTRODUCTION

The object of this study is to produce a picture of the private soldier of the American Revolution as he lived, ate, was punished, played, and worshiped in the army camp. Drawing that picture not only from the standpoint of the continental congress, the body which made the rules and regulations for governing the army, or from the officer's view point as they issued orders from headquarters rather just a study of the soldier himself in the camp conditions and his reaction to them. It was easy for congress to determine the rations or for the commander-in-chief to issue orders about housing conditions and sanitation, but the opportunities for obeying those orders were not always the best. It is just that fact, not what was intended, but what happened, that is to be discussed.

The soldier in camp is an aspect of the Revolutionary War which has been taken up only in a very general way by writers of that period of history, except perhaps the conditions at Valley Forge, for at least their terrible side is quite generally known. Charles Knowles Bolton has studied the private soldier under Washington<sup>1</sup>, but has emphasized other phases of the soldier's life than those taken up in this study.

The material has been gathered mostly from letters, journals, orderly books, and diaries of the officers and privates, written while in camp. The difficulty confronted has been to get the diaries of the private soldier. They have either not been

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1. Bolton, The Private Soldier Under Washington.





published or if they have been published they have been edited in such a way as to make them useless for a study of social conditions in camp, the emphasis having been placed on the military operations and tactics rather than the every day incidents in the soldier's life.

The soldier has been studied after he went into camp. Little has been said about the conditions which led to the war or the conditions as they were before the struggle began except as they are used to explain existing facts. It has been the plan in most of the chapters to give a brief resume of the plans made by congress or the commander-in-chief for the working out of that particular part of the organization, then to describe the conditions as they really were.

There has been no attempt made, for it would be an almost impossible task, to give a picture of the life in all the camps but rather the more representative phases have been described or conditions in general have been discussed.

The first phase of camp life considered is that of the housing conditions, the difficulties encountered, the description of the huts, the method of construction, and the furnishing. This is followed in the second chapter with a study of the food and clothing, the supply and scarcity of those necessities. The third chapter will have to do with the health and sanitation of the soldier while encamped, the hospital system, the number sick, the diseases most prevalent and the means of prevention. The soldier's leisure time will be the subject of the fourth chapter, the sort of recreation he had been in the habit of at home and the ways he found of amusing himself in camp conditions. The soldier's religion forms the subject matter of the fifth chapter, the influ-



ence of the minister before the war, his place in the army, the religious exercises in camp and their effect upon the individual and the war in general. The last chapter will in a way be a recapitulation of all that has gone before by drawing a picture of a day with a soldier in camp emphasizing the discipline and duties of camp life.





## Chapter I

### HOUSING CONDITIONS

The war was on, the Lexington and Concord fray was over, Paul Revere had made his memorable ride, and the young patriots with enthusiasm at white heat were swarming from village and country side leaving their work and homes. Where they were going they did not know, they were going to fight with little thought of where they were to live or what they were to eat and wear. There was a continental congress but it had little authority and the fact was that very few members of that mushroom growth army even felt that they were fighting for a confederation for in their minds they were for the various states, and it was to the various states they looked for support and it was to those states that the honors were to go. It was not until the day before the battle of Bunker Hill that congress had appointed a commander-in-chief and it was almost a month later when Washington took command in Boston. There was an army of sixteen thousand men mostly from the New England States strengthened by about three thousand from the more southern states during the next month.<sup>1</sup> It was more nearly a mob than an army. There was no directing force, no one to superintend the building of barracks, no one to distribute food or to take charge of the supplies.

The Provincial Congress of Massachusetts on hearing of Washington's appointment ordered on June 26, 1775 "the President's (of the college) house in Cambridge, excepting one room, reserved

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1. Van Tyne, The American Revolution, p. 44.

1892

January 1st

Dear Mr. [Name]

I have the pleasure to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 27th inst. and in reply to inform you that the same has been forwarded to the proper authorities for their consideration. I am sorry to hear that you are not satisfied with the result of the investigation, but I am sure that the authorities will do all in their power to rectify the matter. I am, Sir, very respectfully,  
Yours truly,  
[Signature]

for the President for his own use, be taken, cleared, prepared, and furnished for the reception of General Washington and General Lee"<sup>2</sup>. It seems as though the General only occupied that house for a short time and then moved to what was called the "Craig House" for on July 8, 1775, the committee of safety directed that the house of John Vassel, a refugee loyalist, should be put in condition for the reception of the commander-in-chief and later that his welfare should be looked after, by providing him with a steward, a house-keeper, and such articles of furniture as he might ask for.<sup>3</sup>

Such were the headquarters of the first camp of the Revolution but the story of the privates' quarters is quite a different thing. The troops were not quartered at one place, they were scattered about the surrounding territory some at Roxbury, some at Winter Hill, others at Prospect Hill and Sewall's Farm and at various small towns along the coast.<sup>4</sup> Some of them were living in houses and churches, others were occupying barns<sup>5</sup> and still others were constructing their own places of shelter using sail cloth, logs, stones, mud, sod, rails or anything else which would lend itself to the purpose.<sup>6</sup> A good description of this motley host is given us by Rev. Wm. Emerson of Concord, "the sight is very diverting

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2 Mass. Hist. Soc. Pro. Vol. XII, p. 257, footnote, and Ford, Writings of Washington, Vol. III, p.3.

3 Mass. Hist. Soc. Pro. Vol. XII, p. 257, footnote, and Ford, Writings of Washington, Vol. III, p.3.

4. Ford, Writings of Washington, Vol. III, p.11.

5. Lyman, Journal, (Nov. 17, 1775) P. 116

6. Force, American Archives, Ser. 5, Vol. III, Col. 593.

The first part of the book is devoted to a general introduction to the subject of the history of the English language. It begins with a discussion of the early forms of the language, such as Old English and Middle English, and then moves on to a more detailed examination of the changes that have taken place over the centuries. The author discusses the influence of various factors, such as contact with other languages, internal developments, and the role of the written word, in shaping the modern English language. The second part of the book is a detailed study of the vocabulary of the English language. It begins with a discussion of the basic vocabulary, such as the words for numbers, colors, and body parts, and then moves on to a more detailed examination of the specialized vocabulary of different fields, such as science, medicine, and law. The author discusses the ways in which new words are created, such as through borrowing from other languages or through the process of coinage, and then moves on to a discussion of the ways in which the meaning of words changes over time. The third part of the book is a study of the grammar of the English language. It begins with a discussion of the basic grammar, such as the rules for forming sentences and the use of punctuation, and then moves on to a more detailed examination of the more complex grammatical structures, such as the use of the passive voice and the infinitive. The author discusses the ways in which the grammar of the English language has changed over time, and then moves on to a discussion of the ways in which the grammar of the English language is used in different contexts, such as in formal writing and in informal conversation. The fourth part of the book is a study of the pronunciation of the English language. It begins with a discussion of the basic sounds of the language, such as the vowels and the consonants, and then moves on to a more detailed examination of the ways in which these sounds are combined to form words and sentences. The author discusses the ways in which the pronunciation of the English language has changed over time, and then moves on to a discussion of the ways in which the pronunciation of the English language is used in different contexts, such as in formal writing and in informal conversation. The fifth part of the book is a study of the history of the English language. It begins with a discussion of the early forms of the language, such as Old English and Middle English, and then moves on to a more detailed examination of the changes that have taken place over the centuries. The author discusses the influence of various factors, such as contact with other languages, internal developments, and the role of the written word, in shaping the modern English language. The sixth part of the book is a study of the future of the English language. It begins with a discussion of the ways in which the English language is used in different contexts, such as in formal writing and in informal conversation, and then moves on to a discussion of the ways in which the English language is likely to change in the future. The author discusses the influence of various factors, such as contact with other languages, internal developments, and the role of the written word, in shaping the future of the English language.

The book is written in a clear and concise style, and it is well organized and easy to read. It is a valuable resource for anyone who is interested in the history of the English language, and it is also a useful reference work for students and teachers of English. The book is written by a leading expert in the field, and it is based on a wealth of research and scholarship. It is a must-read for anyone who is interested in the history of the English language.



to walk among the camps. They are as different in their form as the owners are in their dress and every tent is a portraiture of the temper and taste of the persons who encamp in it. Some are made of boards, some of sail cloth, again others are made of stone and turf brick or brush. Some are thrown up in a hurry, others curiously wrought with doors and windows done with wreaths and withes in the manner of a basket".<sup>7</sup> Washington wrote from Cambridge to congress on July 10, 1775 about a month after taking command and said, "we labor under great Disadvantages for want of tents for tho' they have been help'd out by a collection of now useless sails from the Sea Port Towns, the number is yet far short of our Necessities"<sup>8</sup>.

When tents were used for shelter at Cambridge or at other places it was very seldom that any thing more than "Mother Earth" served as floors and sometimes that was so wet and miry that the soldiers during the rainy seasons were forced to raise the ground with "Rushes, Barks, and Flags in the dry"<sup>9</sup> and at other times the tents were taken down during the day for the ground to dry and then put up again at night.

It would be difficult to get any where more frank reactions to housing conditions than those which were given by Dr. Waldo<sup>10</sup> in a poem written while in camp describing the general con-

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7. Quoted in Trevelyan, American Revolution, Vol. I, p.324.

8. Ford, Writings of Washington, Vol. III, p.11.

9. Trumbell, Journal, (Sept., 19, 1775), P. 1A6

10. Dr. Waldo, was a surgeon in the continental Army, 1775-1777.



ditions but particularly the tents and huts. The part quoted below describes a stormy day and the hardships endured when the army was encamped in tents.

"Though huts in Winter shelter give,  
Yet the thin tents in which we live,  
Through a long summer's hard campaign,  
Are slender coverts from the rain,  
And oft no friendly barn is nigh  
Or friendlier house to keep us dry,

-----

Move tents and baggage to some height,  
And on wet cloths, wet blankets lie  
Till welcome sunshine makes them dry.  
Others despising storm and rain  
Still in the flat and vale remain,  
There sleep in water muck and mire,  
Or drizzling stand before a fire  
Composed of statly piles of wood,  
Yet oft extinguished with the flood.<sup>11</sup>

As the weather grew colder and the men were still in tents it was the practice to build chimneys<sup>12</sup> on the tents or rather in front of the tents. They were built on the outside and concealed the entrance which served the double purpose of keeping out

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11. Poem by Dr. Waldo in Historical Magazine, Sept., 1863, p.270.

12. Lyman, Journal, (Oct., 16, 1775). P. 121





the wind and also keeping in as much heat as possible.<sup>13</sup>

The tents were supposed to house about six men and no more than fourteen tents were allowed to a company of about seventy two.<sup>14</sup> The tent was the most common mode of housing. It was used whenever it was possible to get material except when the army went into winter quarters then the log huts were built. The tents were usually formed in two ranks in regular lines<sup>15</sup> and often the seasons advanced so rapidly that the snow would be four feet deep around each tent<sup>16</sup>, it even being February before the huts were finished in some instances.<sup>17</sup>

The furnishings of the tents were very meagre, one person even remarking that they were greatly favored in having a supply of straw for beds, The straw was placed on the ground and five or six soldiers would crowd together on it hoping to keep warm<sup>18</sup>, sometimes each had a blanket and sometimes there was one blanket for three or four. The sentry was instructed to keep the fire burning in the chimney outside<sup>19</sup> which added a little to the comfort.

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13. Chastellux, Travels in America, p.104.

14. Lewis, Orderly Book, (Aug., 18, 1776), P. 78

15. Chastellux, Travels in America, p. 104.

16. Thacher, Military Journal, p. 181.

17. Greene, Life of Greene, Vol. 2, p. 185.

18. Thacher, Military Journal, p. 181.

19. Ibid., p. 176.



When the army went into winter quarters the soldiers were a little more comfortable. Morristown and Valley Forge were the two representative winter quarters. The location of these permanent camps was usually chosen because of the ease with which building materials could be obtained or because there was easy access to food supplies.

As orders came to go into winter camp the men were divided into companies of twelve. Each group was to build its own hut and lucky was the group which happened to get the most carpenters, for General Washington offered a prize of twelve dollars to the group in each regiment which finished its hut first and did the best work.<sup>20</sup>

While the men were busy cutting the logs and bringing them in, the superintendent appointed from the field officers marked out the location of the huts. They were usually in two or three lines with regular streets and avenues between them, altogether forming a compact little village.<sup>21</sup> The space in front of the huts was cleared and used for a parade ground by the various regiments.<sup>22</sup> Whenever it was possible the huts were built on an elevation, the health of the army being the object considered.<sup>23</sup>

The only tools the soldier had to work with were his

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20. Greene, Life of Greene, Vol., 1, p.538.

21. Greene, Life of Greene, Vol. I, p. 528.

22. Thacher, Military Journal, p. 155.

23. Chastellux, Travels in America, p. 202.

The first part of the paper discusses the importance of the study and the objectives of the research. It also outlines the methodology used in the study and the results obtained. The second part of the paper discusses the findings of the study and the implications of the results. The third part of the paper discusses the conclusions of the study and the recommendations for future research.

The study was conducted in a laboratory setting and the results were compared with those obtained in previous studies. The findings of the study are discussed in detail and the implications of the results are discussed. The conclusions of the study are discussed and the recommendations for future research are given.

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axe and saw. He had no nails and no iron of any sort, just the trunks of trees to cut into the desired lengths and a little mud and straw<sup>24</sup>. Each hut was fourteen by sixteen feet, with log sides six and one-half feet high. The logs were notched on the ends and fitted together in a dovetailing fashion. The spaces between the logs being made airtight with clay and straw. The roof was a single sharp slope that would shed the snow and rain easily, made of timbers and covered with hewn slabs and straw. There might be boards for the floor, but often there was not even a board to use for that purpose and just dirt served instead. Each hut inhabited by privates had one window and one door, the officers quarters usually had two windows. The windows and doors were formed by sawing out a portion of the logs the proper size and putting the part sawed out on wooden hinges or sometimes in the case of windows the hole was covered with oiled paper to let in light. The door was in one end and at the opposite end a chimney was built, built in a manner similar to the hut itself except that it was made of the smaller timbers and that both the inner and outer sides were covered with a clay plaster to protect the wood from the fire.<sup>25</sup> The huts were in one room usually, except the officers and theirs were divided into two apartments with a kitchen in the rear. Each such hut was occupied by three or four under officers, the generals had either their own

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24. Thacher, Military Journal, p. 155.

25. See Chatellux, Travels in America, p. 302.  
 Greene, Life of Greene, Vol. 1, p. 538 and  
 Thacher, Military Journal, p. 155.



private hut or else lived in a private house near the camp.<sup>26</sup>

In the same poem as mentioned above written by Dr. Waldo is a description of the building and furnishing of a hut which warrants repeating.

My humble hut demands a right  
 To have its matter, birth and site  
 Described first! of pondrous logs  
 Whose bulk disdains the winds or fogs  
 The sides and ends are fitly raised  
 And by dove-tail each corner's brac'd;  
  
 Athwart the roof, young saplings lie  
 Which fire and smoke has now made dry -  
 Next straw wraps o'er the tender pale,  
 Next earth, then splints o'erlay the whole;  
 Although it leaks when showers are o'er  
 It did not leak two hours before,  
 Two chimneys placed at opposite angles  
 Keep smoke from causing oaths and wrangles,  


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 Our floors of sturdy timbers made,  
 Clean'd from the oak and level laid;  
 Those cracks where zephyrs oft would play  
 Are tightly closed with plastic clay;  
 Three windows, placed all in sight,  
 Through oiled paper give us light;

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26. Thacher, Military Journal, p. 155, and American Hist. Mag. Vol. 3, p. 157.





One door on wooden hinges hung,  
 Lets in the friend, or sickly throng;  
 By wedge and beetles splitting force  
 The oaken planks are made though coarse,  
 By which is formed a strong partition  
 That keep us in a snug condition;  
 Divides the kitchen from the hall,  
 Though both are equal and both are small,  
 Yet there the cook prepares the board,  
 Here serves it up as to a lord,

The above description no doubt applies in general to any of the winter quarters. Often the camp was better situated for obtaining the necessary supplies and, too, after the soldiers had built one such town of huts the next would be better because of their experience. The camp at Morristown was better than the one at Valley Forge<sup>27</sup>. The quarters were large and huts were built to be used for social affairs such as dances and lodge meetings.

When the army was only stationed at a place for a short time as for instance when they were encamped near the enemy planning an attack and did not<sup>care</sup> to build the more permanent quarters, which took more time to complete, and when living in tents was not practicable, they built what the French called barbaques, which could be thrown up in a day or two<sup>28</sup>. These temporary quarters

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27. Greene, Life of Greene, Vol. II, p. 160.

28. Chastellux, Travels in America, p.66 .



consisted of a wall of stone heaped up, the spaces between filled with mud, and a few planks formed the roof. A chimney was built at one end and the only opening was a small door at the side of the chimney<sup>29</sup>.

When the army was on the march the soldiers carried their tents with them if it was possible but a great many circumstances arose which made that impossible. Then they had a hut of brush or sod or even just sky to cover and protect them<sup>30</sup>. At other times they slept in barns or churches,<sup>31</sup> or where ever they could find a place.

As might be expected the furnishings of the huts were of a very meagre sort. There were beds of straw usually on the floor or else raised from the floor to get away from the dampness<sup>32</sup>. Each man was supposed to have with him his own blanket and cooking utensils, but it often happened that there was but a kettle or two for the whole company<sup>33</sup>. Since the actual necessities were so meagre there surely were no unnecessary articles. There were none of those things which would tend to make the camp quarters the least bit like home. One man describes the difficulty of finding a place to write and ends by saying that the railing in a near by church was the best place<sup>34</sup>. The only light they had was furnished by candles which were a part of every man's rations and the tallow from the

29. Chastellux, Travels in America, Vol. II, p. 160.

30. See, Thacher, Military Journal, p.176, Trumbell Journal, Aug., 7, 1775; Waldo, (Journal Nov. 29, 1777), p. 130.

31. Squir, Journal, (Sept., 13, 1775), p. 13

32. Lossing, Life of Washington, Vol. VI, p. 572.

33. Waldo, Journal, (Dec. 1777), p. 131.

34. Fitch, Journal, (Aug. 20.) p. 44





cattle killed for camp use was made into candles.

The men crouched together in those huts and the poor ventilation coupled with the fact that the only means of heating was an open fire place which sent about as much smoke into the room as it did out through the chimney produced a condition which was almost unbearable.<sup>35</sup>

From this study it would seem as if there were at least three classes of barracks, the tents used when practicable, the huts for winter quarters, the barroques for temporary housing, and if one wanted to mention a fourth, it would be just any place where ever a soldier might lie down.

When the housing situation is looked at from one angle the view is of the worst possible, but when on the other hand one realizes that each time the troops went into camp the whole process had to be gone through with from the cutting of the logs to the moving into the huts and besides that they had no tools, the whole thing seems wonderful.

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35. Greene, Life of Greene, Vol. I, p. 570.



## Chapter II

### FOOD AND CLOTHING

If the problem of housing was a serious one and one which caused a great amount of suffering the question of food was even more serious. The theory of getting the food for the soldiers was all very simple, but not so simple in practice. According to theory the various colonies were apportioned the amount they were to supply and were to deliver their portion to the camp which might be designated by the commander-in-chief. The lack of authority of congress which played havoc so many times with the smooth running of affairs also played havoc in the commissary department.

The apportionment plan was carried out to some extent, but of course was not to be depended upon for often the colonies got the supplies to camp, but more often they did not. The amount to be supplied was divided up among the inhabitants of the states, in the case of meat some giving one hundred and fifty pounds and others one hundred and eighty pounds according to their ability. The other supplies were divided up in the same way. When a given community was ready to send their supply some of the farmers would take the job of driving the cattle to the camp, receiving about a dollar a day and expenses while they were traveling<sup>1</sup>.

A Frenchman who traveled in America during the revolutionary period told of his experience when he tried to get a room in an inn, which was filled with farmers on their way to camp with

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1. Chastellux, Travels in America, p. 58.





a herd of cattle. In that particular group there were thirteen men and two hundred and fifty cattle.

July 19, 1775, Joseph Trumbell was made commissary general of stores and provisions<sup>2</sup> by the continental congress. November 4, of the same year the following resolution was made in congress in regard to the rations of the private soldier. "Resolved, that: A ration consist of the following kind and quantity of provisions viz.:

1 lb. of beef, or  $\frac{3}{4}$  lb. pork or 1 lb. salt fish, per day.

1 lb. bread or flour per day.

3 pints of pease or beans per week, or vegetables equivalent, at one dollar per bushel for pease or beans.

1 pint of milk per man per day or at the rate of  $\frac{1}{72}$  of a dollar.

1 half pint of rice, or 1 pint of indian meal per man per week.

1 quart of spruce beer or cider per man per day, or nine gallons of molasses per company of 100 men per week.

3 lb. candles to 100 men per week for guards.

24 lb. of soft or 8 lb. of hard soap for 100 men per week<sup>3</sup>

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2. Journals of Congress, Vol. II, p. 190.

3. Journals of Congress, Vol. III, p. 322.



The rations mentioned in orderly books or journals were the same as the above except that butter was added in some cases and a pint of rum was allowed on the day a man was on fatigue duty or on special occasions,<sup>4</sup> but in the large the rations given at the beginning of the war by congress were followed whenever there were supplies enough to admit of any definite plan being followed. The officers received rations according to their rank.<sup>5</sup>

Thus would have ended the story of the revolutionary soldiers food if the theory had been practicable, but as it was not, there is a different story to tell. The conditions on the march to Quebec with Arnold were almost unendurable. The march was only started when the soldiers were put on short rations receiving three-fourths of a pound of meat and bread instead of a whole pound,<sup>6</sup> and as they proceeded the conditions only grew worse until when they were not yet nearing their destination the last of the flour was divided. There were just seven pints for each man. That amount was to last seven days, thus each man had a pint a day to live on and that had to be divided into a gill for breakfast, half a pint for dinner and the remaining gill for supper. It was mixed with clear water with no salt and laid on the coals to heat a little and then was nibbled as the soldiers marched on or else it was boiled like

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4. See, Lyman, Journal, App. and Thacher Military Journal, p.62.

5. See, Thacher, Military Journal, p. 62.

6. Meigs, Journal, ( Oct., 15, 1775) p. 233.





starch and eaten in that fashion.<sup>7</sup> It happened sometimes that some soldier had the good fortune to kill a partridge, much to his joy, for that meant soup could be made.<sup>8</sup> The condition only grew worse instead of better and all the food was gone, the next move was to kill the dogs which were in camp<sup>9</sup> even the legs and claws were boiled for soup. When the situation had become so acute that the soldiers had given up their moose skin moccasins to boil in an attempt to get a little nourishment,<sup>10</sup> a moose was killed, a halt was called and soup was made for the hungry soldiers of the entire animal, hoofs, horns and all.<sup>11</sup>

If we follow the division of the army which was sent against the Indians in Sullivan's expedition in 1779, the conditions will be found to be somewhat different for that march was made during the summer and fall rather than fall and winter as the march to Quebec had been, and besides the western campaign was into a country which abounded in beans, peas, corn, cucumbers, pumpkins, squashes, and watermelons.<sup>12</sup>

The soldiers were short on rations<sup>13</sup> and out of bread,

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7. Thayer, Journal, (Oct., 28, 1775 ) p.12.

8. Ibid.

9. Headley-Chaplains and Clergy of the Revolution, p. 100, and Thayer, Journal, Nov. 1, 1775.

10. Thayer, Journal, (Nov. 1, 1775) p. 14.

11. Headley, Chaplains and Clergy of the Revolution, p. 100.

12. Barton, Journal, (Aug. 27, 1779) p. 7; Burrows, Journal, (Aug. 27, 1779) p. 43.

13. Burrows, Journal, (Aug. 30, 1779) p. 44; Hubley, Journal, ( Oct. 1, 1779), p. 166.





but it was not felt so keenly because of the substitutes they could get.<sup>14</sup> The main object of the expedition was to devastate the Indian's land and one duty was to destroy or take all the food which came in their way. When the soldiers came to a field of corn, their first duty was to feast on it and then destroy all they could not use or carry away with them.<sup>15</sup> If the corn was in a condition for roasting, they did that or made succatash; if it was too hard for roasting they converted some old tin kettles found in the Indian villages into large graters by punching holes in the bottom. Then one of the military duties of the soldiers was to grate the corn into a coarse meal which was mixed with boiled pumpkins or squash and kneaded into cakes and baked on the coals<sup>16</sup> and even that coarse food was relished by the men when fatigued after a long march.

This rather amusing entry, yet terrible if true, is found in one diary of the expedition "July 7 - I eat part of a fried Rattle Snake to day which would have tasted very well had it not been snake".<sup>17</sup>

The conditions in the camp were somewhat different than those on the march for in camp what the rations were depended on the amount of supplies. If they were plentiful, full rations could be drawn by each soldier, but when they were scarce each soldier had to take less. The time and place of drawing supplies seemed to vary with circumstances, and no definite plan was followed.

14. Barton, Journal, ( Aug. 27, 1779), p.7.

15. Burrows, Journal, (Aug. 27, 1779) p. 43; Fogg, Journal ( Aug. 29, 1779) p.94.

16. Davis, Journal, Hist. Mag. Ser. 2, Vol. III, p. 203.

17. Dearborn, Journal, ( July 7. 1779 ) p. 74.



It is a mistake to think that the soldier of the American Revolution was always suffering for the want of food. The picture drawn for us most often is that of the distressing conditions. There was a brighter side, although it is true that the soldier suffered many times. When the camps were situated in or near an agricultural community the farmers swarmed to camp with their produce charging exorbitant prices, but if the soldier had any money he was usually willing to buy. In the course of eight days the caterer of a single mess purchased three barrels of cider, seven bushels of chestnuts, four of apples, at twelve shillings a bushel, and a wild turkey<sup>18</sup> which weighed over seventeen pounds.

In winter when there was no produce to be brought in and no way of securing provisions the story was not so bright. The conditions at Valley Forge are quite well known. How the rations were cut down until it was "Fire cakes and Water" for breakfast, and water and fire cakes for dinner<sup>19</sup> or how the soldiers ate every kind of horse feed but hay<sup>20</sup>, and often they were without meat for eight or ten days<sup>21</sup> and longer without vegetables.

Supplies were gathered from every conceivable source, sometimes cows were part of the supply company, taken along for the

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18. Trevelyan, American Revolution, Vol. I, p. 327.

19. Waldo, Journal ( Dec. 21, 1777) p. 132.

20. Thacher, Military Journal, p.180.

21. Ibid, p. 80.





purpose of supplying milk. One man writes in his diary his appreciation of a cow which supplied them milk on the march with Sullivan's expedition.<sup>22</sup>

The methods used at that time for cooking seem very simple and inefficient now. Huge bake ovens were built in the camp and whenever there was flour to use, bakers baked the bread for the camp.<sup>23</sup> The quality of the bread furnished in that way was certainly not beyond reproach for often it was sour and unwholesome.<sup>24</sup>

There were huts built for kitchens, one for each company and there the soldiers took turns cooking for their company<sup>25</sup> or else each soldier cooked his own food over an open fire. At times the fuel became so scarce that the fences<sup>26</sup> around the camp were torn down and burned, and after that the food had to be eaten raw because of the lack of fuel.<sup>27</sup> If there was material to be used for fuel and other supplies some distance from the camp, it was no uncommon sight to see soldiers yoked together acting the part of horses<sup>28</sup> in order to get the supplies to camp.

Today, this question of food for the revolutionary soldier, in the light of present day events, looks rather inefficient and unscientific.

22. Hubley, Journal, ( Oct. 1, 1779 ) p. 166.

23. Roger, Journal, ( June 24, 1779 ) p.248.

24. Coits, Orderly Book, ( July 7, 1770 ) p. 36.

25. Lyman, Journal, ( Nov. 21 ) p. 127, and ( Dec., 3, 1775 ) p. 131.

26. Greene, Life of Greene, Vol. I, p.141.

27. Greene, Life of Greene, Vol. I, p. 141.

28. Lossing, Life of Washington, Vol VI, p. 572.



When there was plenty the soldiers feasted, when food was scarce they fasted, but it must be remembered that there was no dependable supply, no directing force, and no distributing agency, and beside those hindrances there were no ways of preserving food as there are today.

A naked or half clothed army did not make a very imposing looking force, even if they did have a place to live and something to eat. They had to have something to wear if they were to meet the enemy on the field. Steuben wrote "The description of the dress is most easily given. The men were literally naked some of them in the fullest extent of the word. The officers who had coats had them of every color and make. I saw officers at a grand parade at Valley Forge mounting Guard in a sort of dressing gown made of an old blanket or woollen bed cover".<sup>29</sup> This description, no doubt was appropriate for part of the army, part of the time, but not for all the army all the time.

The troops as they were assembled at Boston did present a peculiar picture. Each person wearing the costume best suited to his individual notion of a suitable uniform, with a tendency toward frill, ruffles, and feathers, each thinking that the gorgeousness added to the dignity and effectiveness of the whole. Some were in citizens clothes, some in the hunting shirt of the back-woodsman, and some even in the blanket of the Indian, for, it was the notion of some, that riflemen should ape the manners of the savage.<sup>30</sup>

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29. Kapp, Life of Steuben, pp.116-117.

30. Henry, Journal, in Penn. Ar. Ser. 2, Vol.XV, p.59.





Washington took the matter into consideration and wrote congress " I find the Army in general and the Troops raised in Massachusetts in particular very deficient in necessary clothing upon Inquiry there appears no probability of obtaining any supplies in this quarter and the best consideration of this matter I am able to form I am of the opinion that a number of hunting shirts not less than ten thousand would in a great Degree remove this difficulty in the cheapest and quickest manner I know nothing in a Speculative view more trivial yet if put in practice would have a happier Tendency to unite the men and abolish those provincial Dist<sup>s</sup>tructions which lead to jealousy and dissatisfaction".<sup>31</sup>

He suggested the hunting shirt because it was cheap and "besides it is a dress justly supposed to carry no small terror to the enemy who think every such person a complete marksman".<sup>32</sup>

It was decided that the hunting shirt should be used and also that the continental government should supply the clothing and then ten per cent of each man's wages should be withheld each month.<sup>33</sup> The quartermaster general had charge of the clothing supply and at regular intervals he was supposed to distribute clothing to the soldier, but the supply varied to such an extent that no regular plan could be followed.

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31. Ford, Washington Writings, Vol. III, p. 13.

32. Ibid.

33. Ibid, and "Uniforms of the American Army" in Mag. of Am. Hist., Vol. I, p.476.





The following was considered an ordinary man's outfit for a year;

Two linen hunting shirts,

Two pairs of overalls,

A leathern or woolen waist coat with sleeves,

A pair<sup>of</sup> breeches,

A hat or leathern cap,

Two shirts,

Two pair of hose,

Two pair of shoes,<sup>34</sup>

The whole was to amount to about twenty dollars.

The soldier was considered in full uniform when he appeared on parade with " a clean shirt, leggings or stockings, hair combed, shirt collar buttoned, with stock, Hunting shirt, well put on hat".<sup>35</sup>

Since the material for the hunting shirts was difficult to get, the officers as well as the men were to dye their shirts in a uniform manner.<sup>36</sup>

The different ranks of a soldier were shown by the hunting shirt. A captain's was short and fringed, the private's short and plain, the sergeant's was to have a small white cuff and<sup>be</sup> plain, and the drummer's was to have a dark cuff. Both officers and soldiers were to have hats cut round and bound with black, the brims

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34. Elbert, Orderly Book, p. 7.

35. Lewis, Orderly Book, (Aug., 18, 1776), p.77.

36. Lewis, Orderly Book, ( April 3, 1776), p. 13..



of the hats were to be two inches deep and cocked on one side with a button and a loop, and a cockade which was to be worn on the left side. There was also a distinction made by the wearing of a certain colored cockade in the hat. The field officers were red or pink, the captain yellow or buff, and the subaltern green.<sup>37</sup>

The material for the soldier's clothing was supplied by the various colonies. The following resolution is typical of numerous ones passed by the different colonies. "That a quantity of home made cloth or other if that can't be obtained as far as may be of a brown or cloth colour, sufficient for three thousand coats and the same number of waist coats and as many blankets as can be obtained in the colony 3000 felt hats, cloth of check Flannel or some linen if that can't be obtained sufficient for six thousand shirts and also six thousand pairs of shoes"<sup>38</sup> or as in Massachusetts a committee was appointed to collect four thousand pairs of stockings.

The material after being collected was made up by regimental tailors, the commanding officer was to make a report as to the number of tailors employed in the regiment and also whether there were not more tailors in the regiment than were employed in making clothing.<sup>39</sup>

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37. -Lewis, Orderly Book, ( April 3, 1776), p. 13.

38. Elbert, Orderly Book, ( Mar. 16, 1708 ) p. 8.

39. American Archives, Ser. 5, Vol. I., pp. 302, 456.

The first part of the paper is devoted to a general discussion of the problem of the origin of life. It is shown that the problem is not only a scientific one, but also a philosophical one. The author discusses the various theories of the origin of life, and shows that the most plausible one is the theory of spontaneous generation. This theory is based on the fact that life is a complex of many different parts, and that these parts are all found in the same place, and at the same time. This is a strong argument in favor of the theory of spontaneous generation.

The second part of the paper is devoted to a detailed discussion of the theory of spontaneous generation. The author shows that this theory is based on the fact that life is a complex of many different parts, and that these parts are all found in the same place, and at the same time. This is a strong argument in favor of the theory of spontaneous generation. The author also discusses the various objections to this theory, and shows that they are all unfounded. The author concludes that the theory of spontaneous generation is the most plausible one, and that it is the only one that is based on scientific facts.

The third part of the paper is devoted to a discussion of the philosophical aspects of the problem of the origin of life. The author shows that the problem is not only a scientific one, but also a philosophical one. The author discusses the various theories of the origin of life, and shows that the most plausible one is the theory of spontaneous generation. This theory is based on the fact that life is a complex of many different parts, and that these parts are all found in the same place, and at the same time. This is a strong argument in favor of the theory of spontaneous generation.

The author concludes that the theory of spontaneous generation is the most plausible one, and that it is the only one that is based on scientific facts.



The women at home aided very materially in the clothing problem by their spinning, knitting and collecting of linen.<sup>40</sup>

When persons called on Mrs. Washington, whether she was at home or in camp, they usually found her knitting and she had sixteen spinning wheels running at one time.<sup>41</sup> Other women all over the country followed her example.

Instances, almost without number, are mentioned in diaries and journals of the nakedness of the army, some without shoes, with only pieces of blankets wrapped around their feet,<sup>42</sup> thousands without blankets,<sup>43</sup> others with their shirts in strings,<sup>44</sup> and added to all that the paymaster without a dollar and the quartermaster in almost the same situation.<sup>45</sup>

Even the soldiers had to suffer from the want of clothing yet they were able to see the funny side of the situation. The story is told in one diary of a party that was given by an officer for which invitations were extended to all, the only restriction being that no one with a whole pair of breeches could be admitted.<sup>46</sup>

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40. Thacher, Military Journal, p. 234.

41. Humphreys, Catherine Schuyler, p. 171.

42. Shreve, Journal, Am. Hist., Mag. Vol. III, p. 568.

43. Thacher, Journal, May 26, 1775.

44. Waldo, Diary, ( Dec., 14, 1777 ) p. 130.

45. Ford, Washington Writings, Vol. III, p. 146.

46. Kapp, Life of Steuben, p. 119.



## Chapter III

## HEALTH AND SANITATION

The health of the soldier was not entirely forgotten. Those in authority made an attempt to prevent or at least to lessen the pain and suffering of those who were taken sick or were wounded in army service, but often the measures of prevention instituted, the methods of checking contagion and the means of allienating pain were of the crudest sort and to us of the twentieth century they seem almost inhuman. It must be remembered that not even our simple remedies of today were known then, not to mention our modern methods of combating disease.

The continental congress thought of that phase of army conditions and on July 25, 1775, the following provisions were made. For an army of twenty thousand men a hospital was to be established under the direction of a Director General, his salary was to be four dollars per day, He was to superintend the whole, furnish the medicines and bedding and make a report to and receive orders from the commander-in-chief. Under the director there were to be four surgeons, one apothecary and twenty surgeons' mates, each receiving two-thirds of a dollar per day, whose duty it was to visit and attend the sick. There was also to be a matron who had under her direction the nurses, one for every ten sick soldiers<sup>1</sup>. Then in July 1776, the resolution was passed that the number of hospital surgeons and mates was to be increased in proportion to the increase in size of the army not<sup>to</sup> exceed one surgeon and five mates to every five thousand men and to be reduced as the army was reduced.

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1. Journals of Congress, Vol. II, pp. 209, 210, 211.





Dr. Church was appointed by congress as director, but before October 14, 1775, he had been taken into custody for holding correspondence with the enemy<sup>2</sup>, and on October 17, 1775, Dr. Morgan was elected in his stead.<sup>3</sup> But even after the new director was appointed there was still room for complaint for Washington wrote to Congress "I am amazed to hear the complaints of the hospital on the east side of Hudson's river. -----

I will not pretend to point out the causes; but I know matters have been strangely conducted in the medical line. I hope your new appointment when it is made, will make the necessary reform in the hospital, and that I shall not, be shocked with the complaints and looks of poor creatures perishing for want of proper care, either in the regimental or hospital surgeons".<sup>4</sup>

Congress had made several attempts to organize the hospitals and in July 1776, resolutions had been passed which defined more fully the duties of the various officials both of the departmental and the regimental hospitals.<sup>5</sup> There was to be a director and under him the directors of the various departmental hospitals.<sup>6</sup> But since

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2. Journals of Congress, Vol. III, p. 294.

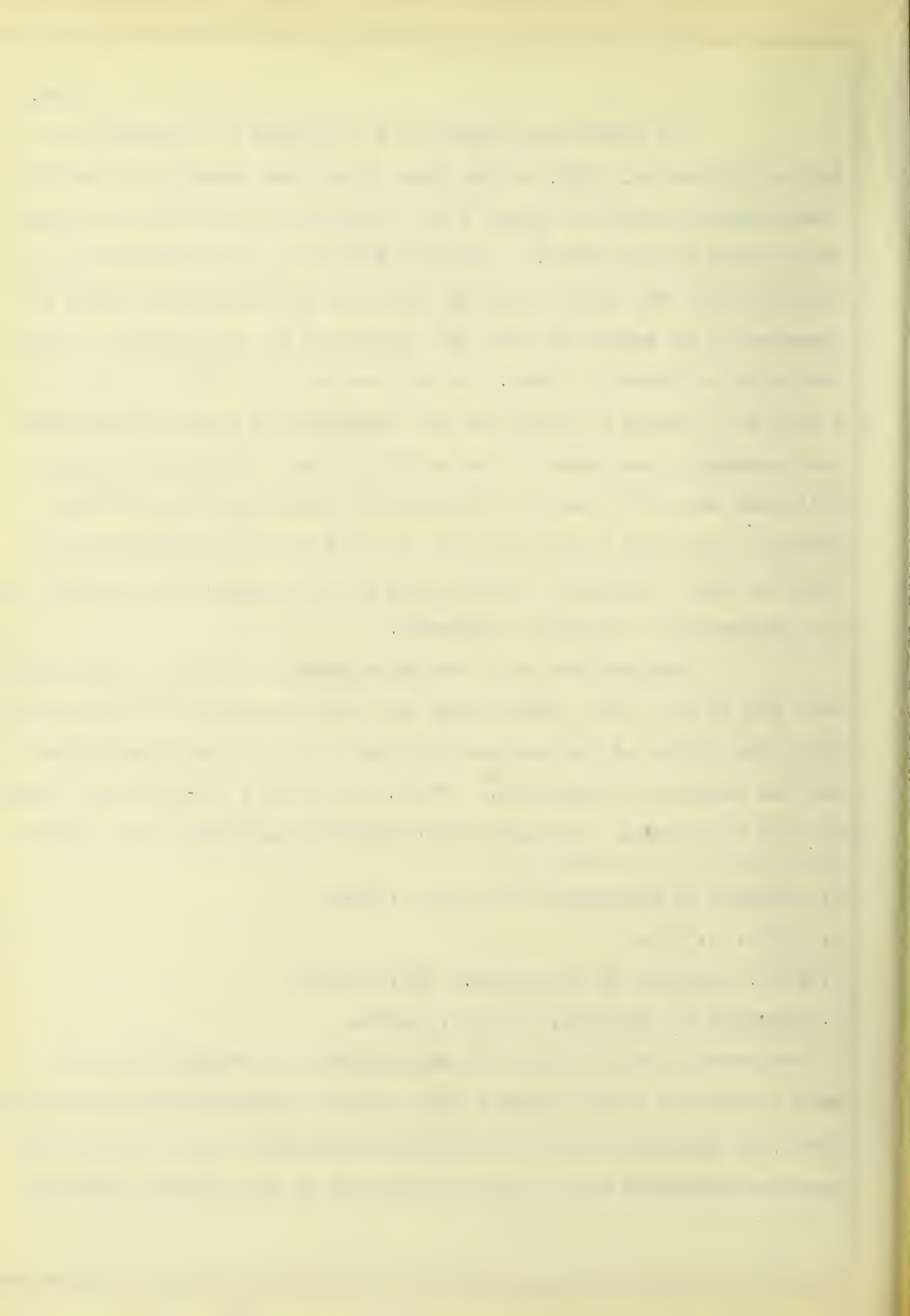
3. Ibid., p. 296.

4. Ford, Writings of Washington, Vol. V, p. 204.

5. Journals of Congress, Vol. II, p. 568.

6. The country was divided into departments or divisions and in each department there was what was called a general departmental hospital, in distinction to the regimental hospitals where the soldier received immediate care, before being sent to the general hospital.





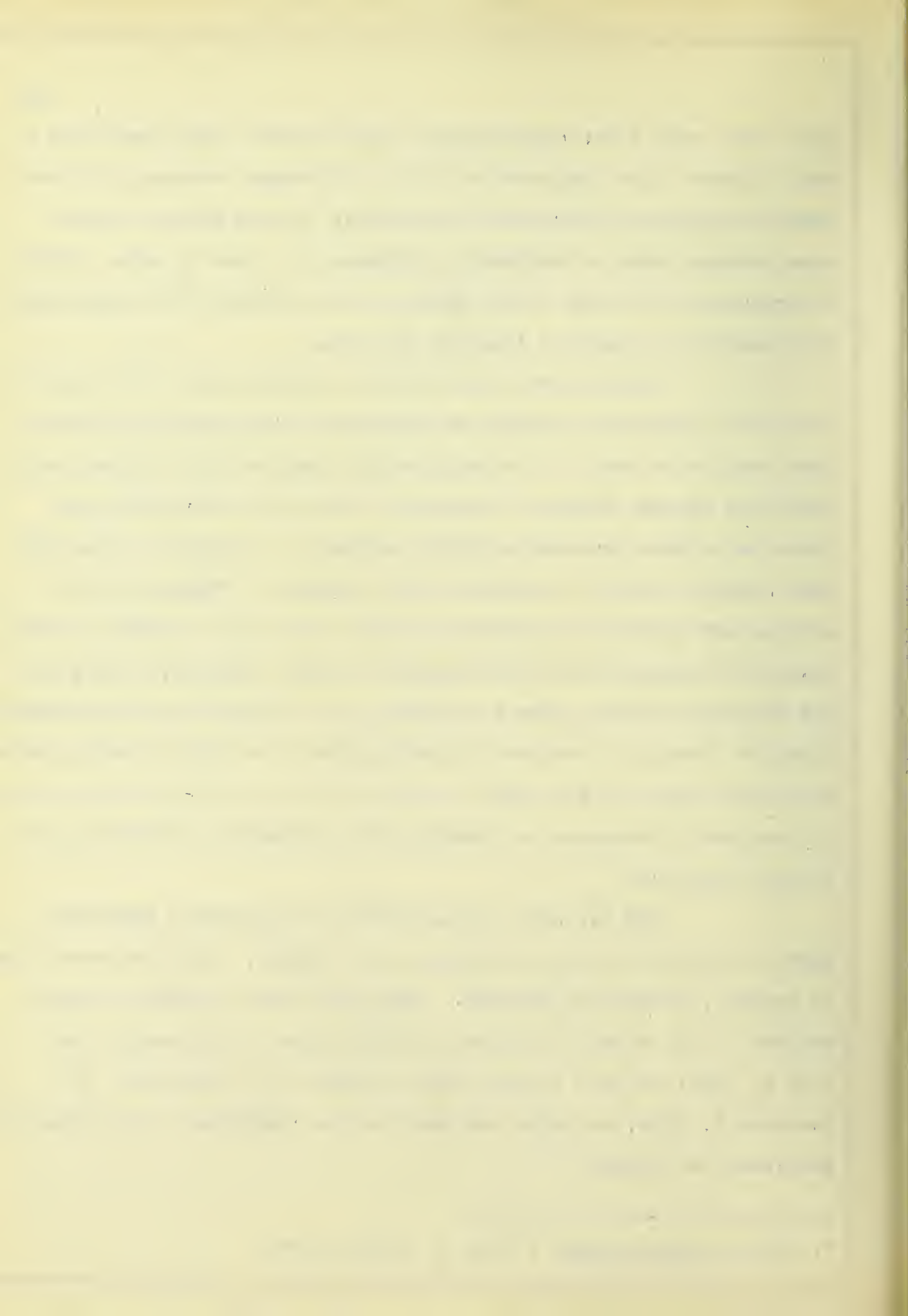
there were only a few departmental hospitals and those few often a long distance from the scene of battle it became necessary to have branch hospitals or regimental hospitals. At the head of those were persons known as regimental surgeons, who were to make reports of expenses, and lists of the sick to the director of the departmental hospital and receive supplies from him.

The plan was then that the soldiers were to be cared for by the regimental surgeon as long as it was possible and then they were to be sent to the departmental hospital for further care.<sup>7</sup> These two systems seemed to interfere with each others work and there was always jealousy existing between the director of the general hospital and the surgeons of the regiment. "There will be nothing but continued complaints of each other; the director of the hospital charging them with enormity in their drafts for the sick and they him with the same for denying such things as are necessary. In short there is a constant bickering among them which tends greatly to the injury of the sick -----  
The regimental surgeons are aiming, I am persuaded, to break up the general hospital."

The two most representative departmental hospitals were, it might be said at Bethlehem and Sunbury, but there were others at Reading, Lititz and Ephrata. Bethlehem was a Moravian village and was in the midst of military affairs almost continually from 1775 to 1781; in fact it was twice the seat of a hospital. On December 3, 1776, an order was sent to the committee of the town of Bethlehem as follows:

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7. Coit,, Orderly Book, ( June 7, 1775) p. 36.



"Gentlemen,- According to his excellency General Washington's Orders, the General Hospital of the Army is removed to Bethlehem and you will do the greatest Act of humanity by immediately providing proper buildings for their reception the largest and most capacious will be the most convenient. I doubt not, Gentlemen but you will act upon this occasion as becomes men and christians  
-----" <sup>9</sup>

It was by the above process that the little peace loving village of Bethlehem and many others like it were thrown into confusion and dwelling houses or other buildings were turned into hospitals, the men began to play the part of nurses, to help care for the sick and dying sent from camp, and the women prepared lint and bandages. The buildings which under ordinary circumstances could accommodate about two hundred were made to accommodate five or six hundred <sup>10</sup>

The housing accommodations of the regimental hospitals were even more varied, for they were housed in any thing from a capital building <sup>11</sup> to a log hut, <sup>12</sup> including private homes, <sup>13</sup> church, <sup>14</sup> barns, and court house <sup>15</sup>, depending upon what happened to be near

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9. Jordon, "Military Hospitals at Bethlehm and Lititz during the Revolution" in Penn. Mag. Vol. XV, p.137.

10. Jordon, "Military Hospitals at Bethlehm and Lititz during the Revolution" in Penn. Mag. Vol. XX, p. 137.

11. Lewis, Orderly Book, ( June 11, 1776) p. 49.

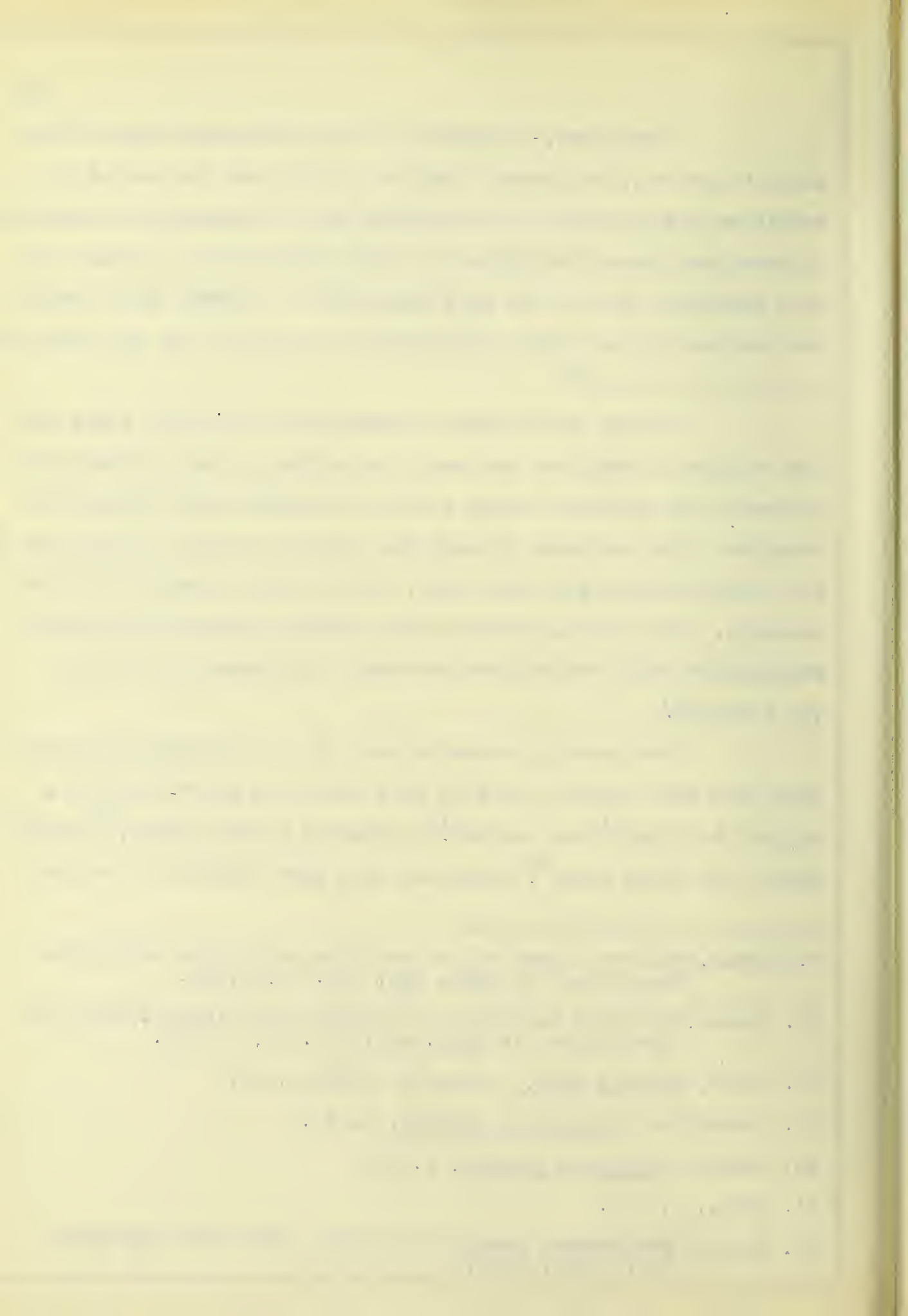
12. Chastellux, Travels in America, p. 70.

13. Thacher, Military Journal, p. 31

14. Ibid., p. 112.

15. Jordon, "Continental Hospital Returns, 1777-1780" Penn.Mag. Vol. XXIII, p.38.







the camp. A hut or group of huts were sometimes built for the purpose in or near the camp. They were built in a manner similar to the dwelling huts<sup>16</sup> only larger with furnishings as meagre, straw for the bed<sup>17</sup> tells the tale of equipment.

But the hospitals were of little value if there were not able physicians<sup>18</sup> and antiseptics and anaesthetics were almost unknown. Besides the lack of skill and proper medicine and instruments, for some of the instruments described are almost unconceivable, there was a lack of cleanliness in conducting the operations for that was not insisted upon then as it is today.<sup>19</sup> Of hospital methods Dr. Waldo wrote December 25, 1777, "But we treat them differently from what they used to be at home under the inspection of old women and Doct -----, We give them mutton and Grogg and avoid pudding, pills, and powders."<sup>20</sup> This perhaps was a little extreme, but it at least reflects the conditions. Thacher described the awful condition in which soldiers came to the hospital with wounds covered with putified blood and full of magots which were destroyed by the application of tincture of myrrh.<sup>21</sup>

Director-General Shippen, in explaining the causes of the mortality among the soldiers attributed it to; "The want of clothing and covering necessary to keep the soldiers clean and

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16. Chastellux, Travels in America, p. 70.

17. Elbert, Orderly Book, ( Feb., 11, 1778 ) p. 101.

18. American Archives, Ser. V, Vol. III, Col. 1584.

19. Goodale, British and Colonial Army Surgeon, p. 10.

20. Dr. Waldo, Diary ( Dec. 25, 1777 ) p. 31.

21. Thacher, Military Journal, p. 112.



warm, articles at that time not procurable in the country; -- partly from an army being composed of raw men, unused to camp life and undisciplined; exposed to great hardships and from the sick and wounded being removed great distances in open wagons."<sup>22</sup>

As to the kind of disease most prevalent and the number in the hospitals because of sickness in proportion to those there because of injuries, some idea can be formed from the hospital reports sent in weekly from the departmental hospitals.

Although some of the diseases listed in the reports are unknown to us now and there is no way of knowing what the proportion the sick was of the entire army in that section. However, the returns do state the number sick during the various seasons, and show in which season of the year there was the most sickness.

The following are the returns from the Sunbury hospital for the four seasons of the year, spring, summer, fall and winter.

March 6 to 13, 1780

"Wounded	4
Dysentery	1
Diorrhoea	0
Rheumatism	2
Ophthalmia	1
Asthma	1
Ulcers	1
Total	<u>10</u> " 23

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22. Jordon, "Military Hospitals at Bethlehem and Lititz during the Revolution" Penn. Mag. Vol. XV, p. 137.

23. Jordon, "Continental Hospital Returns 1777-1780, Penn. Mag. Vol. XXIII, p. 219.





July 13 to September 22 1779

"Pleurisy	0
Peripneumony	2
Angina	1
Rheumatism	14
Bilious fever	8
Intermitting fever	0
Putrid fever	0
Dysentery	19
Dyarrhea	11
Gravel	12
Cough and Consumpt.	4
Hernia	5
Lues	14
Epilepsy	2
Itch	2
Ulcers	9
Wounded	<u>33</u>
Total	126 " 24

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24. Jordon, "Continental Hospital Returns 1777-1780, Penn. Mag.,  
Vol. XXIII, p. 211.



November 1 to 7 1779

"Dysentery	3
Diorrhoea	2
Rheumatis	2
Intermit.	2
B. Remit.	5
Asthma	1
Ophthalmia	2
Ulcers	2
Wounded	<u>11</u>
Total	30" <sup>25</sup>

January 24 to 31 1780

"Wounded	6
Intermitting fever	0
Dysentery	1
Diarrhoea	1
Asthma	1
Ophthalmia	1
Rheumatism	3
Ulcers	<u>2</u>
Total	15 " <sup>26</sup>

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25. Jordon, "Continental Hospitals Returns, 1777-1780", Penn. Mag.  
Vol. XXIII, p. 216.

26. Ibid., p. 217.

# Table 1

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# Table 2

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99	100	100
100	100	100



If the above tables are any index at all the most dangerous season was summer in spite of the crowded unsanitary conditions of the winter quarters. They also show that the number in hospitals due to sickness was larger than the number due to injuries received in battle.

Smallpox was one of the most dreaded of all the diseases, mostly because there were few ways of combating the disease. Inoculation was only slightly known and there was much opposition to it, even sermons were preached on the question it was so much discussed.<sup>27</sup> The British knew the New England people were especially opposed to it and were known to send out spies to spread the disease in the American camp which Shreve wrote "killed more Yankees than they did".<sup>28</sup>

The disease was especially serious in the Northern army<sup>29</sup> causing greater dread than the enemy.

Thacher in his Military Journal emphasizes another disease which caused a great deal of suffering but strange to say there was only one remedy for it and that was a furlough for the disease was home-sickness. In reality that was a fact which caused anxious moments for General Washington for the men were continually trying to bribe the physicians to declare that they were unfit for duty.<sup>30</sup>

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27. Sermon quoted in Mass. Hist. Soc. Pro. Ser. 1, Vol. IX, p. 275.

28. Shreve, Journal In Am. Hist. Mag., Vol. III, p. 565.

29. American Archives, Ser. 5, Vol. I, p. 145.

30. Ford, Writings of Washington, Vol. III, p. 447.

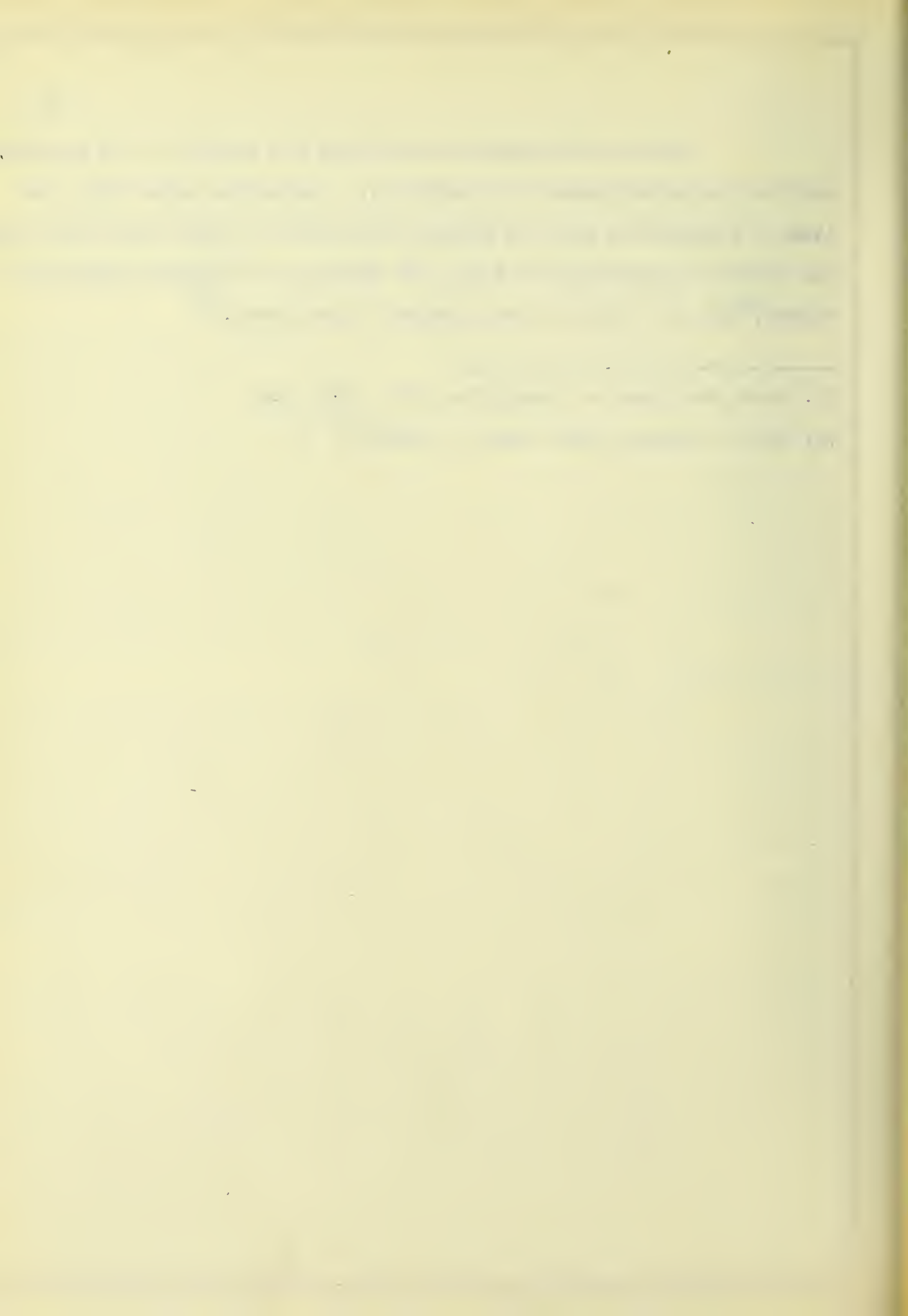


Other provisions were made for the health of the soldiers besides the establishment of hospitals. The others were along the line of prevention, such as keeping the tents and huts clean and dry, the careful preparation of food, the washing of clothes, caring for refuse,<sup>31</sup> and the soldiers own personal cleanliness.<sup>32</sup>

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31. Ford, Writings of Washington, Vol. III, p.5.

32. Coit , Orderly Book, (June 1, 1775.), P. 15.





## Chapter IV

## RECREATION IN CAMP

If there must be a certain proportion of work and play in every one's life to make for efficiency, then the soldier of the Revolutionary War was far below normal in the scale of efficiency for recreation in any organized form is found to have been entirely lacking.

But before too severe a judgment is placed upon this lack of recreation the conditions the soldier left at home must be studied. Recreation as such had not been a part of his daily routine. It has been estimated that nine-tenths of the people lived in rural districts leaving only one-tenth for the cities<sup>1</sup>, an estimate which no doubt is true. The people had never thought of the problems of bad housing, congestion,<sup>or</sup> recreation. They had had the whole of nature for their home and the whole of the frontier to wrestle with.

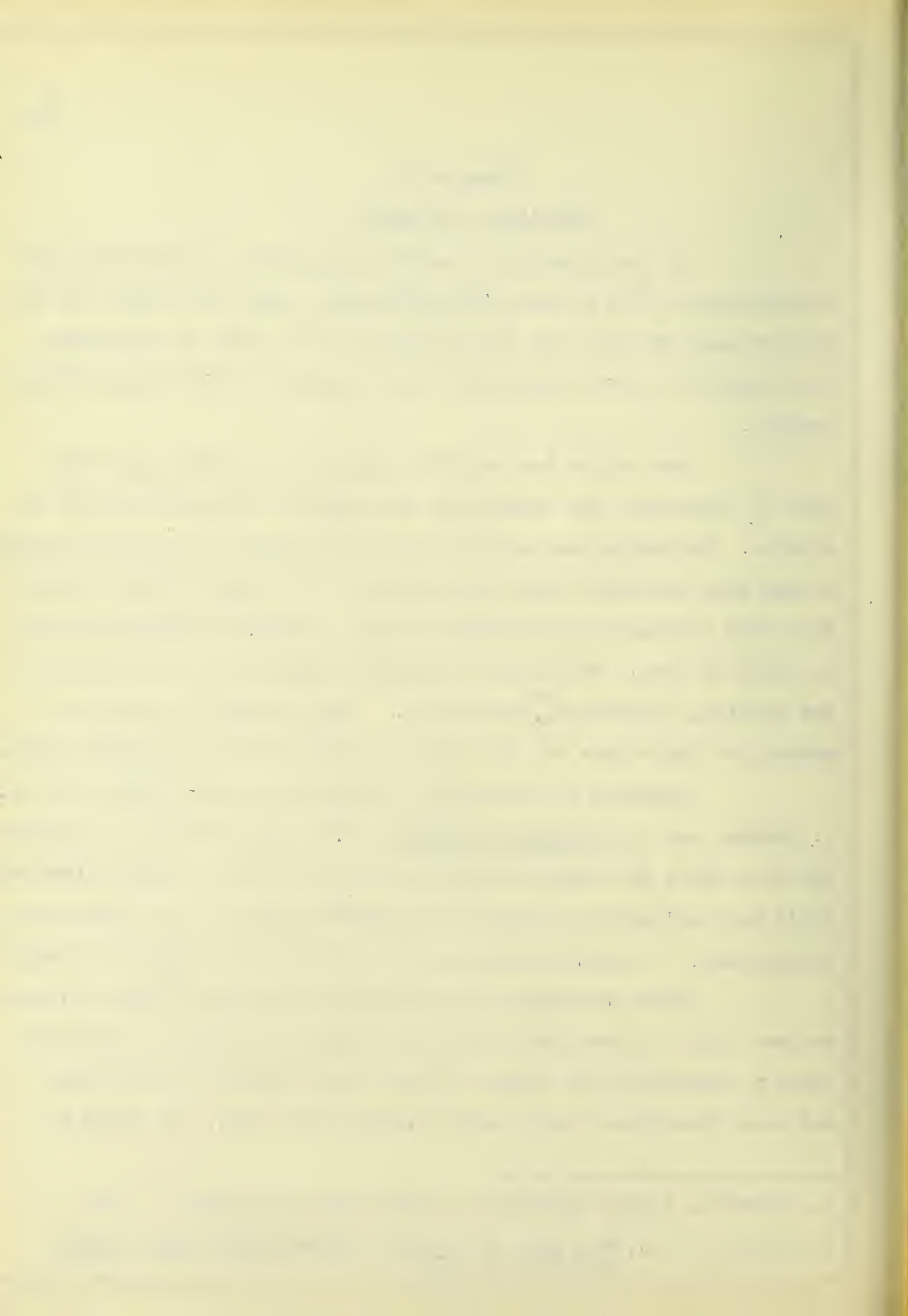
Speaking of the people a generation or two later, Dr. F. L. Paxson says in The Rise of Sport "The fathers of this generation had been sober lot unable to bend without breaking, living a life of rigid and puritanical decorum interspersed perhaps with disease and drunkenness, but unenlivened for most of them by spontaneous play!"<sup>2</sup>

Thus in studying the life of the soldier at home before he went into the army camp, even the slightest traces of twentieth century recreation are found to have been lacking, but that does not mean that those people never forgot their work. It would be

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1. Sherrill, French Memories of 18th Century America, p. 181.

2. Paxson, F. L., "The Rise of Sports" Miss Valley Hist. Review Vol. IV, p. 143.



hard to find a more hospitable group. They were never too busy to entertain. There was the occasional jollification with rum or beer, the card party, the ball, the concert, the theater, and of a more rural type the picnic and the "corn husking".<sup>3</sup>

The conditions in camp were different than those at home. The problems of bad housing, congestion and recreation were then factors to be considered. There was the small unsanitary and poorly ventilated hut with twelve to sixteen men and sometimes even more crowded into it. When the troops first went into winter quarters there was plenty to do in the way of exercise for there were logs to cut and huts to build, but those were soon completed and the men were crowded together with nothing to do.

Something had to happen, the monotony of the dreary days had to be broken. This was brought about in several ways.

Often the punishments ordered by the court martial were administered publicly in camp just to enliven the common routine. When a man was sentenced to death, but had been pardoned by those in charge, the force of going through the punishment was carried out.

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3. The facts pertaining to society at home has been collected from books of travel of the period just previous to the war; Chastellux, Travels In America; Sherrill, French Memories of 18th Century America and others.





The condemned man was brought to the side of his newly dug grave, he was bound and blind-folded, the firing party got in position, the fire lock even snapped, and as might have been expected, the culprit sometimes died of the shock.<sup>4</sup>

The hanging of a man was a gala day in camp and the place of hanging was almost as popular as an amusement park of today. Five soldiers were conducted to the gallows according to their sentences. For the crimes of desertion and robbing the inhabitants, a detachment of troops and a concourse of people formed a circle around the gallows and the criminal were brought in on a cart sitting on their coffins and halters about their necks"<sup>5</sup>

It was frequently stated in the sentence given by court martial that the punishment whatever <sup>it</sup> was, riding the wooden horse, riding the rail, receiving the biblical "Thirty-nine" lashes, or running the gauntlet,<sup>6</sup> was to take place at some time when all the soldiers were together as at the beating<sup>7</sup> of the retreat or at the head of the regiment<sup>8</sup>. Punishments ordered by court martial in that way served two purposes. They furnished amusement for the soldiers at the same time the purpose for which they were intended, that of

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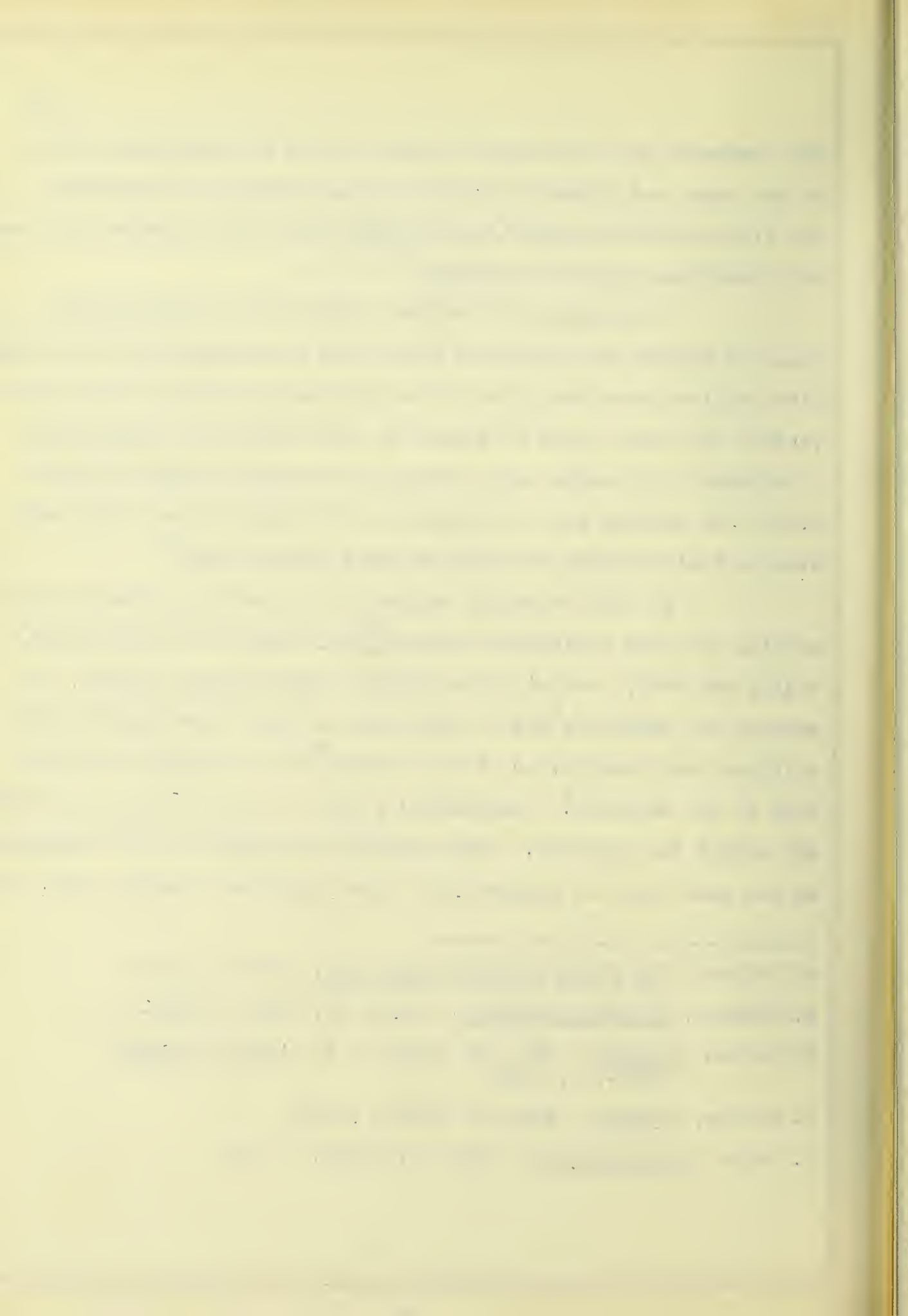
4. Belcher, The First American Civil War, Vol. II, p.83.

5. Thacher, Military Journal, ( April 20, 1779 ) p.158.

6. Barton, Journal ( Aug. 22, 1779) p. 7., Hearts Journal Sept., 9, 1785.

7. Hearts, Journal ( Sept. 9, 1785 ) p. 68.

8. Coits, Orderly Book, ( July 10, 1775), p. 43.



making an example of the misbehavior of one of the soldiers.

While the Virginia rifle men were in camp at the siege of Boston there was a practice which served both as a source of amusement and as a display of marksmanship. There were two brothers, one of whom would place a board five inches wide and seven inches long with a bit of white paper in the middle of it about the size of a dollar, between his knees while the other at about sixty yards distance would shoot eight bullets through it without injuring the brother.<sup>9</sup>

The dual was another common practice which seemed to furnish amusement besides deciding the honor of some individual.<sup>10</sup>

Hunting, too, was a means of cheering the dreary days , but this too was often "Killing two birds with one stone", for often the soldiers went hunting to provide the regular rations, but at other times it was done just for the sake of the sport to be found in it. The following is taken from a New York paper of December 12, 1785. "A Fox hunt. The Gentlemen of the army with a number of the most respectable inhabitants of Ulsler and Orange purpose a Fox Hunt on the twenty third day of this instant to which all Gentlemen are invited with their hounds and their horses. The game is plenty and it is hoped the sport will be pleasant -----<sup>11</sup>.

Along with the hunting frays went fishing<sup>12</sup> and nutting<sup>13</sup>

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9. Virginia Gazette, 1775 quoted Hart & Hill, p. 229.

10. Thacher, Military Journal ( Feb. 1779) 155.

11. New York Packet, Dec., 12, 1782, quoted in Am. Hist. Mag. Vol. III p. 389;

12. Elmer, Journal, (June 24, 1779)p.81, Livermore Journal(May 27,1779) p. 180.

13. Military Journal of Two Private Soldiers, p.77.





trips which added a little variety to the ordinary camp scenes. There were several days celebrated by the Americans at that time which meant a holiday for the soldier with perhaps an extra allowance of rum<sup>14</sup> or meat. Some of those days were Christmas, Thanksgiving, Fourth of July, May day, Commemoration of the French Alliance, or a celebration following a victory. The celebration usually consisted of a parade, a sermon by the chaplain followed by a banquet and perhaps a dance for the officers, and extra rations for the privates.<sup>15</sup>

Another celebration mentioned by several diaries and one which seemed to be a joyful occasion was as one writer said "and (we) convert(ed) the evening to celebrate as usual wives and sweethearts which we do in plenty of grog"<sup>16</sup>

There were a few games which served to shorten some of the long dreary days for the soldier, some of them were; fives,<sup>17</sup> shinny,<sup>18</sup> goal,<sup>19</sup> ball<sup>20</sup> and a kind of football.<sup>21</sup> No description of the

14. Clinton, Order Book quoted by Headley, p.265.

15. McHendry, Journal, ( Dec. 9 ) p.211, and(Sept. 25, 1779) p.207. Blake, Journal, ( July 5, 1779 ) p. 39; Linermore, Journal, ( July 5 ), p. 182; and(Sept 25, 1779), p. 188; Norris, Journal, (July 5, 1779), p. 225., Hardenberger, Journal( Sept.25, 1779) p. 184.

16. Burrows, Journal, ( Oct., 2, 1779 ) p. 50, Elmer, Journal, ( July 3, 1779 ) p. 84.

17. Shute, Journal, ( June 13 and 14, 1779 ) p. 268.

18. Ibid., ( July 23, 1779 ) p. 264.

19. Lyman, Journal, p. 118.

20. Ibid and Military Journal of Two Private Soldiers, p. 70.

21. Fitch, Journal, ( Sept., 14, 1775 ) p. 57.



above games has been found, but to judge by the context they were all outdoor games.

The diversions discussed so far in this chapter have all been outdoor games, but the real test came when the soldiers were crowded into the huts during the winter months with nothing to think of but their own miserable conditions. Since no one had thought of organizing the soldiers' leisure time he had to invent something for himself. The first things thought of, naturally, were the amusements which had existed at home. Card playing came to his mind, but in the army the game of cards or any other game of chance was absolutely forbidden by order of congress and the commander-in-chief. "Any officer, non-commissioned officers, or soldier who shall hereafter be detected playing at toss up, pitch and hustle or any other games of chance in or near the camp or villages bordering on the encampments shall with out delay be confined and punished for disobedience of orders -----The general does not mean by the above order to discourage sports of exercise and recreation, he only means to discontinuance and punish gaming"<sup>22</sup> In another order Washington said, "Men may find enough to do in the service of their God and their country without abandoning themselves to vice and immorality".<sup>23</sup>

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22. Washington, Orderly Book, quoted by Ford, Writings of Washington, Vol. III, p. 155.

23. Washington, Orderly Book, quoted by Ford, Writings of Washington, Vol. III, p. 429.





Dancing had been another form of entertainment at home but that too was usually impossible because of the lack of room. That was especially true at Valley Forge and other camps, but at Morristown, however, a large room in the commissariat store house was reserved for dancing,<sup>24</sup> lodge meetings, and the like for the masons had chapters in the army camps.<sup>25</sup>

At home the soldier had also had his friends and dinner parties, now he had soldier friends, but the only way for him to keep in touch with former friends was by letters and that was a very irregular and uncertain way for mail could only be sent from camp or brought to camp when some one was going home on a furlough or new recruits were coming into camp.<sup>26</sup> The nearest the soldier came to his social dinner and evening at home was the rallies from barracks to barracks when every body who could sing sang.<sup>27</sup>

As for the officers in camp, their leisure time was better provided for. They lived in better quarters, generally, at least larger ones. They, too, had the advantage of being entertained at the homes of the people living in the vicinity of the camp. Even if one's imagination must be drawn upon in order to make the recreation of the private seem recreational, at least, there was a side of camp life which presented a more pleasant picture "If our forefathers<sup>28</sup> bled and suffered they also danced and feasted!" The letters and

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24. Trevelyan, American Revolution, Vol. IV, p. 54.

25. Penn. Archives, Vol. II, p. 18.

26. Fitch, Journal, ( Dec., 5, 1775), p. 88.

27. Humphreys, Catherine Schuyler, p. 177.

28. Humphreys, Catherine Schuyler, p. 167.



diaries of the young officers tell of the gaiety of the war. Even in midst of the gloom at Valley Forge there was drinking from cabin to cabin and dinners in honor of visiting foreigners. No sooner was the army in winter quarters than the ladies began to appear, for Mrs. Washington, Mrs. Greene, and Mrs. Knox made it a practice to spend the winters with their husbands. Mrs. Washington was in the habit of saying that she always heard the last cannon fired in the fall and the first one in the spring.<sup>29</sup>

As soon as the wives appeared, the gaiety began among the families of the officers, the dinner was the favorite method of bringing the families together. "General Greene and his lady present their compliments to Colonel Knox and his lady and should be glad for their company tomorrow at dinner at two o'clock".<sup>30</sup> Often the dinners were in name rather than in reality, for officers and privates suffered alike when food was scarce, but the social time did not depend entirely upon the supply of food. One such dinner is described as having been potatoes with beech-nuts for dessert.

The usual round of pleasure for the officers was dancing, dinners, teas, sleighing parties, horse-back parties, or the celebration of some day or event. Of the dance General Greene wrote on March 19, 1779, "We had a little dance at my quarters a few evenings past. His excellency and Mrs. Greene danced three hours without one

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29. Ellet, Domestic History of the Am. Rev., p. 40.

30. Greene, Life of Greene, Vol. I, p. 193.





sitting down upon the whole we had a pretty little frisk".<sup>31</sup>

Another such affair is described as follows: "There were subscription balls in the commissary store house at which Washington in black velvet, the foreign commanders in all their gold lace, General Steuben being particularly replendent and the ladies in powdered hair, stiff brocades and high heels made a brilliant company!"<sup>32</sup>

In the large it can be said that, the recreation of the American soldier during the Revolutionary War, was invented to supply the need felt rather than an institution thought out before. Some of the practices would hardly be classed as recreation, but they helped to break the monotony and that was the object desired whether it was by enjoying a fellow soldier's punishment or playing an innocent game of ball.

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31. Greene, Life of Greene, Vol. II, p. 161.

32. Humphrey, Catherine Schuyler, p. 176.



## Chapter V

## RELIGION IN THE CAMP

"It is earnestly recommended that all officers and soldiers diligently to attend Divine Service and all officers and soldiers who shall behave indecently or irreverently at any place of Divine worship shall if commissioned officers be brought before a court martial there to be publicly and severely reprimanded by the President, if non-commissioned officers or soldiers, every person so offending shall for his first offence forfeit one sixth of a Dollar to be deducted out of his next pay, for the second offence he shall not only forfeit a like sum but be confined for twenty-four hours and for every like offence shall suffer and pay in like manner, which money so forfeited shall be applied to the use of the sick soldiers of the troops or company to which the offender belongs"<sup>1</sup>

The continental congress in its acts for the regulation of the Army issued the above orders. Orders also came from headquarters directing the soldiers actions along religious lines. "All officers see that their men attend upon prayers morning and evening also the service on the Lord's Day with their arms and accouterments ready to march in case of any alarm, that no Drums to be beaten after the parson is on the stage"<sup>2</sup>.

But the religion of the American soldier was more than an order from the provincial congress or from headquarters. It was

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1. Journals of Continental Congress, Vol. II, p. 112.

2. Coits, Orderly Book, ( June 14, 1775) ., p. 19.





an influence which was an important factor in the soldiers life and in the war. In the American Revolution perhaps the religious element was not the paramount factor as it had been in the crusades or the Puritan Revolution giving character to the whole movement; it rather stayed in the back ground and supported the political and military organizations.<sup>3</sup>

The pulpit had been a factor in shaping the soldiers' life before he left home, it was a day when newspapers and other means of disseminating ideas were not very plentiful and the pulpit was about the only way of reaching the majority of the people. It is said of one minister who was famous for his bold sermons and his purely political discourses although they were delivered from the pulpit he "knows all our best authors and has sometimes cited even in the pulpit passages from Voltaire and Jean Jaques Rousseau".<sup>4</sup>

The house<sup>of</sup> representatives of Massachusetts saw the value of the clergy in shaping public opinion and passed a resolution asking them to make the question of the rights of the colonies a topic of their discussions on week days. The pulpit, too, had its place in the election campaign. There was preached before the governor and house of representatives of Massachusetts what was called the "election sermon". It was a sermon preached by the best ministers of the colony, not exactly as a mere compliment to religion, but with the object in view of instruction. The ministers did not only deliver dissertations on the doctrinal truths, but they discussed the

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3. Headley, Chaplain and Clergy of the Revolution, p. 14.

4. "Narrative of Prince De Broyle" in American Historical Magazine Vol. I, p. 378.



rights of men, the nature of government and theories of liberty and equality. The sermons delivered on such occasions do not seem to be impracticable theological discourses, but rather on the other hand very practicable. The questions of the day being subjects discussed; for it was through the medium of the church that the people received the foundation for their beliefs in political affairs.

On Monday the 29th of May, 1771, John Tucker of Newbury preached the election sermon on the text "Submit yourselves to every ordinance of men for the Lord's sake whether it be the king as Supreme". From that as a text he went into a discussion of the sort of submission which was due to the rulers. In 1773 Charles Turner preached from Romans and tried to show why it was the right and duty of the clergy to enter into politics. The next year when excitement was reaching its height it is interesting to note the sort of text Rev. Hitchcock of Pembroke took for the basis of his sermon. It was from Proverbs XXII, 2, "When the righteous are in authority the people rejoice but when the wicked bear rule the people mourn".<sup>5</sup> It is not hard to believe that just such sermons and many others like them had some thing to do with the Revolution as well as Navigation Acts and Correspondence Committees. Of course it must be said that since the people did not rise as one man there was another view to take on the question, but the people were guided in the opposite view also by the clergy.<sup>6</sup>

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5. For election sermons see Headley, Chaplains and Clergy of the Revolution.

6. See on that phase "Free Thoughts" by Samuel Sebury.







The clergy did more than discuss politics from the pulpit before the conflict broke for when the war was on in earnest and troops were being raised the ministers left their pulpits to take their place in the army not always as chaplains, but sometimes in the ranks and sometimes as head of the company. In one company of minute men from Domeers the deacon went as captain and the minister as lieutenant.<sup>7</sup> Besides the part played by the clergy, the church as a whole was one of the forces working for the care and comfort of the American Soldier. The churches were turned into barracks and hospitals.<sup>8</sup> Messages of the officers of the army describing the soldiers' conditions in camp were read from the pulpit on Sunday Morning; the afternoon congregation would be made up almost entirely of men, and the women were to be found at home knitting or spinning.<sup>9</sup>

When Washington assumed command of the army at Cambridge he found chaplains attached to different regiments sent from various colonies, especially from the New England colonies. Some of these were volunteers without pay and others were appointed by the provincial congress.<sup>10</sup>

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7. Greene, Historical Men of American Revolution, p. 215.

8. See, Wilds Journal, p. 80; Boudinot, Elias, p. 189; Niles Principles and Acts of the Revolution, p. 361.

9. Headley, Chaplain and Clergy of Revolution, p. 323.

10. Headley, Chaplain and Clergy of Revolution, p. 89.



The chaplain of that war was not like the chaplain of the present time. A sort of half-soldier, half-minister, never expected to fight or endure the hardships of the private; on the other hand he was one of the men on the field, but also revered by the soldiers because of the place he had filled in their activities at home.<sup>11</sup>

At first, as has been noticed, there was no regulation concerning the appointment and pay of the chaplain by the continental congress. Washington wrote to congress in December 1775 and said, "I need not point out the great utility of gentlemen whose lives and conversation are unexceptionable being employed for that service in the army".<sup>12</sup> He went on to suggest plans whereby all regiments might be served by a chaplain. The plan which congress adopted was of having a chaplain for every two regiments and they fixed the salary at thirty-three and one-third dollars a month.<sup>13</sup> The plan worked<sup>14</sup> when the soldiers were in camp, but not when they were on the march.<sup>15</sup> In 1776 a chaplain was allowed for each regiment.

According to the regulations of the army, there were to<sup>16</sup> be prayers morning and evening, and on Sunday services were almost

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11. Headley, Chaplain and Clergy of Revolution, p. 89.

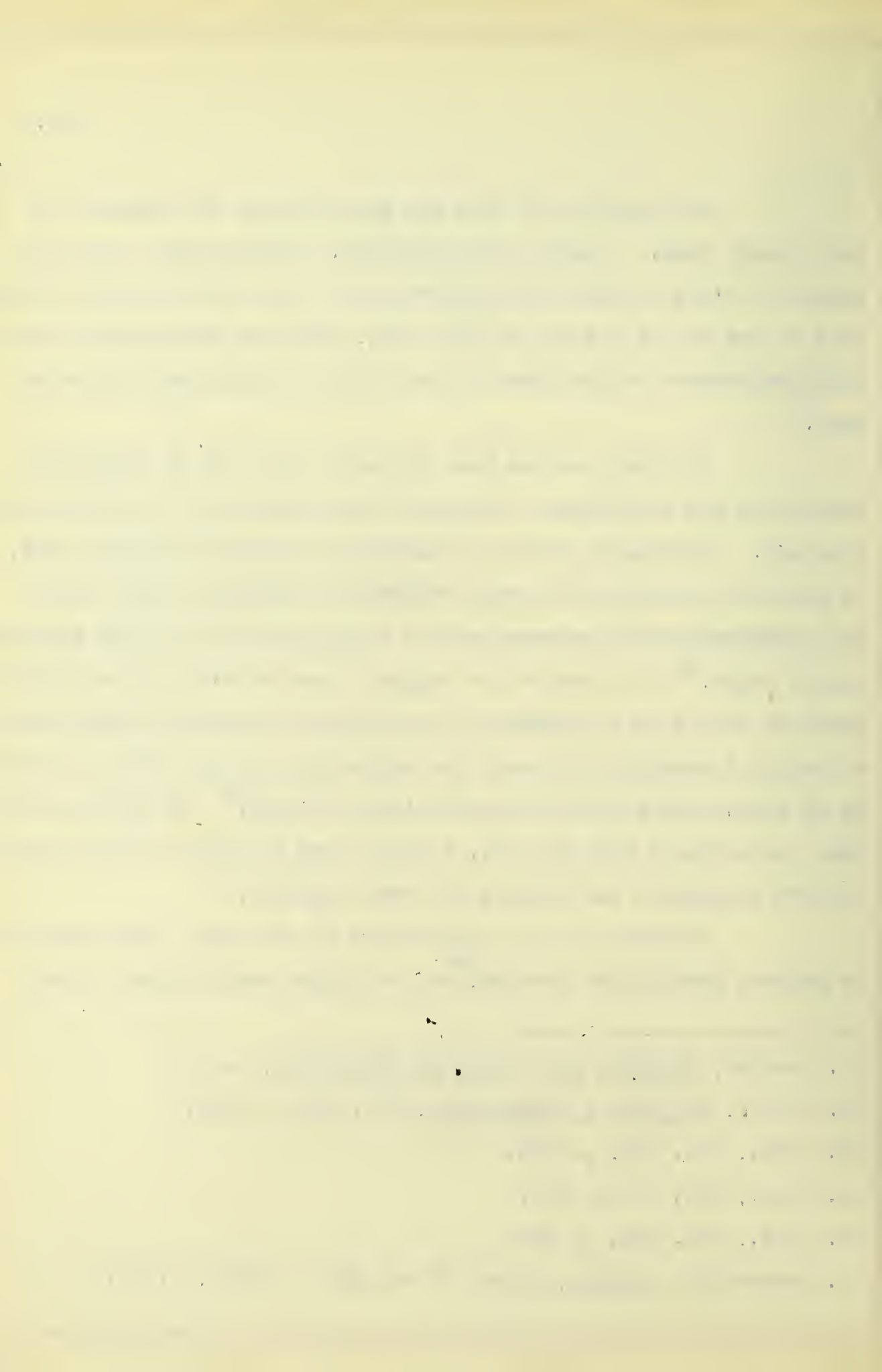
12. Ford's, Writings of Washington, Vol. III, p. 310.

13. Ibid., Vol. III, p. 310.

14. Ibid., Vol. IV, p. 187.

15. Ibid., Vol. III, p. 310.

16. Farnsworth, Journal, (April 20 and May 1, 1775), p. 79.





continuous. There were always two services and often more, the chaplains from the various regiments preaching in rotation.<sup>17</sup>

The places of holding religious meetings varied with circumstances, services were held in a church<sup>18</sup> in or near camp, on a college campus,<sup>19</sup> in an opening in the woods,<sup>20</sup> and in a log hut built for the purpose.<sup>21</sup> When the army entered Cambridge, the next day was Sunday and a stage was erected on the campus by turning up a rum hogshead.<sup>22</sup> On another occasion a pulpit was formed out of knapsacks piled together.<sup>23</sup>

The kind of sermons provided by the chaplains to the soldiers makes an interesting study, they were always of a practicable nature. The sermons seemed to fall into two general classes, one class setting forth the characteristics of a good soldier,<sup>24</sup> and the other those which had to do with the political and social troubles of the time.<sup>25</sup>

There are records of the attitude of the soldier being

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17. Gardner, "Last Cantonment of Continental Army of Rev." in Am. Hist. Mag. Vol. X, p.369.

18. Hosock "Life of Clinton" in Harper's, February, 1859.

19. Headley, Chaplain and Clergy of Revolution, p. 291.

20. Ibid., p. 95.

21. Gardner, "Last Cantonment of Army of Revolution" in Mag. Am. Hist. Vol., X, p. 369.

22. Headley, Chaplain and Clergy of Revolution, p. 291.

23. Ibid., p. 95.

24. Hitchcock, Diary p. 87; Roger, Journal ( July 11, 1779) p. 250; Lyman, Journal ( Oct. 15, 1775) p. 121.

25. Boardman, Journal ( Sept 25, 1775), p.227; Fransworth, Journal, ( Oct., 1, 1775), p.86, Thorton, Pulpit in the Revolution, p.187.



changed very materially by some of the sermons heard both concerning his own personal attitude<sup>26</sup> and his attitude in general toward the war. The story is related that one time Rev. Gano knew that a number of the soldiers in his audience were men who had only enlisted for a few months, hence during the service he made the remark "he could aver of the truth that our Lord and Saviour approved of all those who had engaged in His Service for the whole warfare". The rank and file were much amused and those who enlisted for the whole war forced many short-term men by their jesting to re-enlist.<sup>27</sup>

Another observance which might be considered part of the soldiers' religion, was the day of fasting and prayer ordered by congress and the officials of the various colonies.<sup>28</sup>

There is yet one more effect which grew out of the religious activities of the soldier while in the army camp. That is the weakening of the rigid lines which had been drawn between sects. When the soldier was at home he was, Presbyterian, Anglican, Catholic or what not, but in the army there was a tendency to forget the barriers; both Protestant and Catholic services were held, but it was one of the orders of Washington that no person should make light of another's religion.<sup>29</sup> It had been the custom of the people near Boston to celebrate what was called "Pope Day" when they burned

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26. Farnsworth, Journal, ( May 14, 1775), p. 79.

27. Quoted by Bolton in Private Soldier Under Washington, p. 161.

28. Hitchcock, Journal; <sup>p.107</sup> Coits Orderly Book ( July 15, 1775) Moore  
"Diary" p.18

29. Griffin, Catholics and the American Revolution, Vol. I, p. 127.





an effigy of the Pope; the soldiers were contemplating a celebration of this custom when Washington issued orders against it calling it a "ridiculous and childish custom."<sup>30</sup>

The fact that the chaplain of a regiment might have members of a number of sects in his audience would tend to create a common interest, and also the fact that whenever the troops were near a church they were ordered to attend regardless of denomination. The incident is related of Washington who was Anglican that he and a number of his men, asked a Presbyterian minister to give them communion in his church, and it was gladly done.<sup>31</sup> All of which were factors in bringing about democracy in the church.

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30. Griffin, Catholics and the American Revolution, Vol. I, p. 127

31. Hosach, "Life of Clinton," Harper's, Feb., 1859.



## Chapter VI

## CAMP DUTIES AND DISCIPLINE

The soldier's day began with reveille at sunrise or "when a Sentra Can See Clearly one thousand yards around him and not Before"<sup>1</sup> and ended with tat-too heating at eight o'clock;<sup>2</sup> for after tat-too there was to be no straying about camp without a written pass.<sup>3</sup>

Between reveille and tat-too there were numerous duties to be performed and orders to be obeyed. Some of them seemed foolish and most unnecessary to the average soldier. The first thing was roll call before the doors of the barracks<sup>4</sup> which every one was to appear in full dress, well shaved and with hat cocked<sup>5</sup>. Then came breakfast prepared either by one of the company in the camp kitchen or by each one for himself over the open fire. The breakfast was anything from the "usual dish, a large plate of rice with a little salt"<sup>6</sup> to a heavier meal of meat and potatoes.

Morning prayers<sup>7</sup> followed breakfast and of the routine of the rest of the day Simon Lyman of Sharon wrote "we marched out

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1. Coits, Orderly Book, ( July 20, 1775), p. 54.

2. Lewis, Orderly Book, (June 6, 1776), p. 47.

3. Journals of Continental Congress, Vol. II, p. 115.

4. Lewis, Orderly Book, ( March 28, 1776), p. 8.

5. Lewis, Orderly Book, ( March 28, 1776), p. 8.

6. McDowell, Journal, ( Jan. 11, 1782).





in the morning and exercised and in the afternoon we marched out again and exercised again".<sup>8</sup> Captain Lewis in his Orderly Book recorded the following order "For the future the fatigue parties to parade at 7 o'clock in the morning and return at eleven to their dinners and parade again at two".<sup>9</sup> Then came supper, evening prayers<sup>10</sup> and tat-too.

Camp life was, however, not all a routine of reveille, prayers, drills, meals, and tat-too for there were hundreds of other things which had to be done. There were huts to build<sup>11</sup>, roads to make,<sup>12</sup> entrenchments to construct,<sup>13</sup> fuel to collect,<sup>14</sup> supplies to provide,<sup>15</sup> armaments to make or clean, and drills for the "awkward squad,"<sup>16</sup> besides guard and fatigue duty;<sup>17</sup> not to mention the more domestic duties of cooking,<sup>18</sup> of washing and mending clothes,<sup>19</sup> and cleaning huts, or acting as 'grass guard.'<sup>20</sup>

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8. Lyman, Journal, (Aug. 28, 1775), p. 115.

9. Lewis, Orderly Book, April 6, 1776.

10. Farnsworth, Journal, (May 1, 1775) p. 179.

11. Green, Life of Greene, Vol. I, p. 538.

12. Wild, Journal, (Dec. 27, 1778) p. 120.

13. Hutchinson, Orderly Book, p. 23, quoted by Bolton.

14. Wild, Journal, (Dec. 27, 1778) p. 120.

15. Lyman, Journal, (Nov. 2, 1775) p. 124.

16. Lewis, Orderly Book, (March 28, 1776), p. 8.

17. Lewis, Orderly Book, (April 6, 1776), p. 16.

18. Lyman, Journal, (Nov. 21, 1775), p. 127.

19. Waldo, Journal, (Dec. 31, 1778), p.

20. Lewis, Orderly Book, p. 10.



It can hardly be said that any hard and fast rule was followed in the matter of camp activities for there were circumstances continually arising which altered affairs; there were parades before a visiting officer,<sup>21</sup> and days taken off for washing. Then, too, there was the lack of a permanent organization of the army, which was a serious hindrance in following any different course, for the short time enlistment men were constantly leaving and the new recruits were coming into camp, all of which broke into the routine of camp<sup>22</sup> and often nothing of importance was accomplished for weeks at a time. Simon Lyman of Sharon wrote of the week following August 29, 1775. "Friday, 29th, In the forenoon we went round the town, and in the afternoon we putted up our tents and marched through Cambridge to Charlestown, there we was stationed, we put up our tents.

Tuesday, 3th I rubbed up my gun and looked round the forts.

Wednesday 4th w(eg)ot some boards to fix out tents and it rained and we did not do it.

Thursday 5th It rained, and I wrote a letter home and staid around the house"<sup>23</sup>

When the new recruit was given the duty of being on guard with the orders that he was not to sleep or leave his post he felt for the first time the hand of authority, he felt that the

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21. Lewis, Orderly Book, (March 31, 1779) p. 10; Lyman Journal, (Nov. 29, 1775) p. 125.

22. Thacher, Journal, (Sept. 1776) p. 60.

23. Lyman, Journal (Aug. 29, Oct. 3, 4 and 5, 1775), p. 116.





orders were ridiculous when he must shave every day and appear at roll call every morning with his <sup>hair</sup> powdered, but when he could not go more than a mile from camp without a pass and that only two furloughs were allowed at one time,<sup>24</sup> then he was sure that his personal liberty was imposed upon.

It was just that attitude taken by the soldiers toward their officers and the orders given by them or toward the duties they were ordered to perform that made the question of discipline a serious one. Army life was a novelty at first, but before many weeks had passed the aspect changed. The soldiers were in new conditions and new modes of doing things had to be learned. What to do and what not to do were questions with the new recruits. There had been little of the "being ordered" by anybody at home especially among the New Englanders<sup>25</sup>. Now the private had to salute, take orders from and ask permission of an individual, who in all probability had been his next door neighbor at home with no more training than himself and perhaps one who had just "taken" command without having been appointed by the proper authority.<sup>26</sup>

The trouble came from both sides; the officer felt the importance of his position to such an extent that he could not see the private's view point, but on the other hand the private was not willing to endure an ordinary amount of subordination.

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24. Lewis, Orderly Book, (June 21, 1776), p. 54.

25. Thacher, Military Journal, p. 60.

26. Ibid.



The orders sent out from headquarters concerning the matter were numerous depicting to the soldiers and to the officers as well, their duties and privileges<sup>27</sup>. The question of discipline was one which caused Washington a great deal of concern on first entering camp,<sup>28</sup> and a matter which always brought comment from the foreigners who visited our camps or worked with our army.<sup>29</sup> As the war progressed the conditions grew better, but the personnel changed so often that one group just reached the stage where some sort of law and order was made possible when they left and the whole process was to be gone through again with the newly enlisted group.

The general rules of discipline were laid down by the Continental Congress in what were called "The Rules and Regulations for the Government of the Army". Congress there described the general conduct of the soldiers, as to their duties and privileges and also recommended the punishments which should be inflicted by the court martial in case of violation of the rules by any one.<sup>30</sup> There were also orders issued from headquarters, which gave more detailed directions in respect to the personal appearance of the soldier, how his hat should be cocked, how his hair should be cut, and the like,<sup>31</sup> others in respect<sup>to</sup> the duties of the soldier on

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27. Lewis, Orderly Book, ( Aug. 12, & 19, 1775) Ford, Writings of Washington, Vol. VII, p. 5.

28. Ford, Writings of Washington, Vol. III, p. 267.

29. Ford, Writings of Washington, Vol. III, p. 141 and Kapp, Life of Steuben.

30. Journals of Continental Congress, Vol. III, p. 114.





fatigue<sup>32</sup>, on guard or about the camp, his conduct toward citizens, the punishment for stealing, and numerous other things which were incident to camp life, as the regulation of 'Grog shops',<sup>35</sup> orders, concerning the morale of the soldiers,<sup>34</sup> and health precautions.

The means of enforcing the disciplinary rules was the court martial, an instrument which is of common use in time of war, but some of the trials and decisions of the revolutionary court martial are **interesting** if not amusing and yet significant because of the state of affairs which they reflect.

First as to the organization of the court martial, there was to be a general and a regimental court, the general, the higher and the regimental the lower court. The general court was to consist of not less than thirteen members none of whom were to be under the rank of a commissioned officer and the president was to be a field officer. The regimental court was to consist of not more than five members and in case five could not be assembled three were sufficient, and any commissioned officer of a regiment by the appointment of his colonel could hold the court in the regiment for minor cases.<sup>35</sup>

All crimes not capital and all disorders and neglect that officers and soldiers might be guilty of, though not mentioned

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32. Ibid., ( April 6, 1776) p. 16.

33. Henshaw, Journal.

34. Coit, Orderly Book, ( June 30, 1775), p. 28.

35. Journals of Continental Congress, Vol. III, p. 114.



in the Articles of war, were to be taken into a general or regimental court according to the nature of the crime. The offense could be punished at the court's discretion, but no one was to be sentenced to death except in the cases mentioned in the rules layed down by congress and no sentence was to be executed until the commanding officer had approved it. The commanding officer also had the power to pardon or suspend sentence if he saw fit. According to the organization of the court martial, it was to inflict at its own discretion only degrading, cashiering, drumming out of camp and whipping not exceeding thirty-nine lashes.<sup>36</sup>

According to entries made in orderly books and diaries, those orders were often overlooked and the originality of the members of the court was worked into service.

Thacher said of the punishments ordered by the court martial "Death has been inflicted in a few instances of an atrocious nature, but in general, the punishment consists in a public whipping, and the number of stripes is proportioned to the degree of offense. The law of Moses prescribing forty stripes save one but that number has often been exceeded in our camp. In aggravated cases, and with old offenders in our camp the culprit is sentenced to receive one hundred lashes or more. It is the duty of the drummers and fifers to inflict the chastisement, and the drum major must attend and see that the duty is faithfully performed. The culprit being securely tied to a tree or post receives on his naked back the number of lashes assigned him by a whip formed of several small knotted cords which sometimes cut through the skin at every stroke.

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36. Journals of Continental Congress, Vol. III, p. 115.





However, strange it may appear, a soldier will often receive the severest stripes without uttering a groan or once shrinking from the lash even while the blood flows freely from the lacerated wounds.

"They have now, however, adopted a method which they say mitigates the anguish in some measure. It is by putting between the teeth a leaden bullet, on which they chew while under the lash till it is made quite flat and jagged. In some instances of incorrigibles villians it is adjudged by the court that the culprit receive his punishment at several different times, a certain number of stripes repeated at intervals of two or three days in which case the wounds are in a state of inflammation, and the skin rendered tender and the terror of the punishment is greatly aggravated.

"Another mode of punishment is that of running the gauntlet, this is done by a company of soldiers standing in two lines, each one furnished with a switch and the criminal is made to run between them and receive the scourge from their hands on his naked back; but the delinquent runs so rapidly and the soldiers are so apt to favor a comrade that it often happens in this way punishment is very slight".<sup>37</sup>

Boardman thus recorded a punishment "This morning another rifleman was drummed out of camp not whipped, but if he ever returns again he is to receive thirty lashes".<sup>38</sup> Other punishments were riding the wooden horse for fifteen minutes with two guns tied to the victim's feet and then ten minutes without guns, or riding a rail. There were, too, the fines and imprisonments, but often the

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37. Thacher, Military Journal, ( Jan. 1780), p. 182.

38. Boardman, B., Journal, ( Oct. 11, 1775).



the penalties bordered on the humorous line and furnished real amusement to the rest of the soldiers, one man was sentenced to wear "A clogg chained at his legg" for three days, another was to wear a clog four days with his coat turned wrong side outwards"<sup>39</sup>. The last penalty was for Major Carnes's cordage. Trials were held for anything from disorderly conduct or stealing a shirt to treason.

In the court martial and its actions it is possible to see a reflection of England and the methods of torture used there. The colonists had not been away from the mother country long enough to get away from those devices for the punishment of offenders.

The number and kind of trials also show that the soldiers as a rule were inclined to have their own way and disregard orders for the majority of the trials were for the disobedience of minor orders.

A study of conditions during the Revolutionary War in the light of the present day and especially in the light of the Great War with the care given the soldiers in the way of housing, medical aid, sanitation and recreation makes the soldier of 1776 more of a hero than he had been before. That he under the most adverse circumstances withstood the war conditions and came out victorious for liberty seems almost a miracle.

John Adams described the continental army as follows:

' Our Army at Crown point is an object of wretchedness enough to fill a human mind with horror, disgraced, defeated, discontented, dis-

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39. Quoted by Bolton, Private Under Washington, p. 176.





pirited diseased, naked, undisciplined, eaten up with vermin, no clothes, bed, blankets, no medicines, no vituals but salt pork and flour". One almost wonders that it is not a true characterization but it is interesting to note that of the fifty diaries and journals studied only one or two reflected a pronounced discontented or dissatisfied spirit, the others mentioned the sufferings and hardships but did not complain.

The leaders of the War for Independnece have long been appreciated for the part they played, perhaps over appreciated. But the leaders could not have accomplished their goal had it not been for the private. The private was undisciplined it is true and willful at times, but to him with his sufferings, hardships and even willfullness must be given a great amount of the honor.



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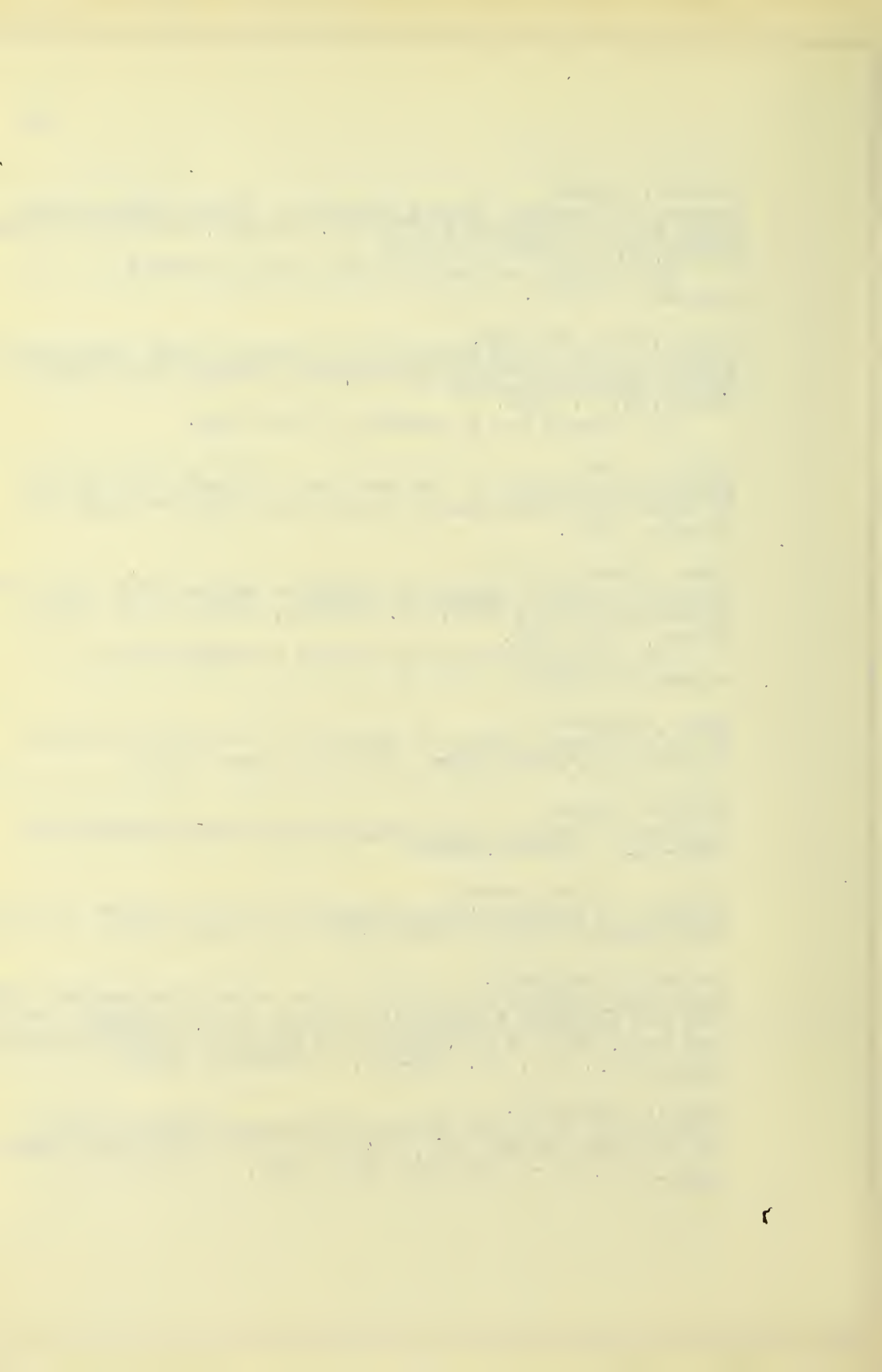
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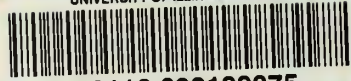
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